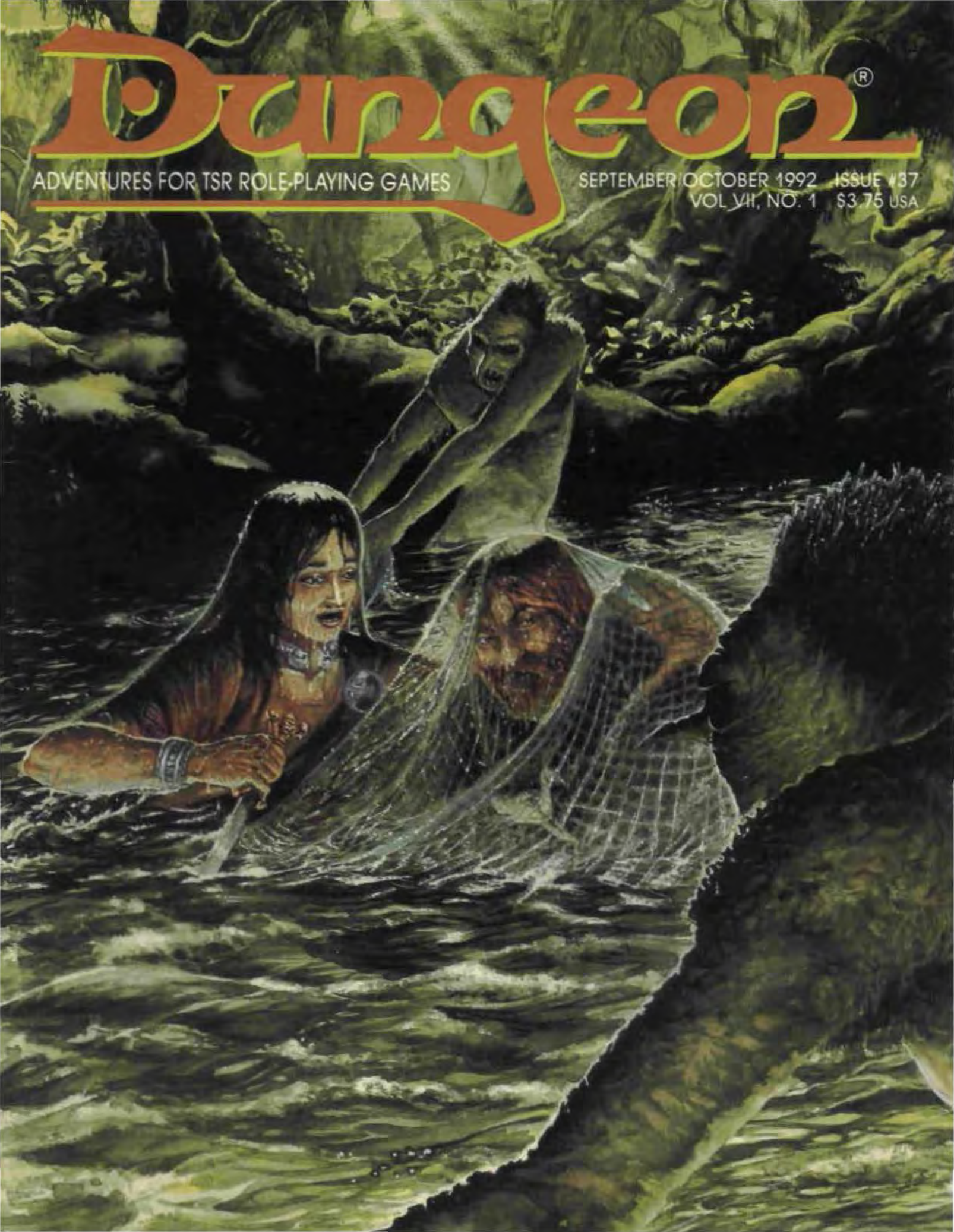
Dungeon®
ADVENTURES FOR TSR ROLE-PLAYING GAMES
SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 1992 ISSUE #37
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Dungeon®

ADVENTURES FOR TSR ROLE-PLAYING GAMES

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 1992 ISSUE #37

COVER: Crossing the Dark Ford can be unhealthy, as two brave adventurers discover in Bob Klasnich's cover painting of a scene from "The White Boar of Kilfay."

Speak Up and Be Counted!

For a long time, I've suspected that there are a lot more of you out there than I hear from each month. Our purchasing department tells me that we print about 40,000 copies of each issue, but no matter how I whine and nag, we hear opinions from barely a dozen of you from one issue to the next. And the names of some of the more diligent letter writers are becoming familiar. Something isn't right.

This is *your* magazine. The adventures are just skeletons that *you* flesh out and bring to life. We want to be a useful tool for all AD&D® and D&D® game players.

One way we decide what you might like to see is by checking on the sales popularity of TSR, Inc.'s various product lines. We figure that if a lot of you are buying DARK SUN™ or SPELLJAMMER® game products, we should increase support of these lines in DUNGEON® Adventures. Another indicator is our submissions pile. If we get lots of RAVENLOFT® adventure submissions but few modules set in the DRAGONLANCE® world, you'll see more RAVENLOFT modules in future issues.

I'm reluctant, however, to let a small number of letter-writers and module-submitters speak for all our readers. I know that you're busy, and I realize that you might not have the time or inclination to sit down and write us a long letter. So I'm going to make this easy (and scientific, even!).

Look across to the opposite page for the 1992 DUNGEON Adventures Survey. Feel free to photocopy as many copies as you need for yourself and anyone else who reads your copy of this magazine. Then fill out the survey and return it to us by October 31. You don't have to give us your name and address for your opinion to be counted, but if you do, we'll enter your name in our drawing for 10 one-year subscriptions to DUNGEON Adventures. That's not a bad deal.

This issue's quote was submitted a very long time ago by Mark Zimin, who gave his address as American Embassy, Paris. Mark, please get in touch with us wherever you are to claim your prize.

Barbara G. Young

Vol. VII, No. 1

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The Readers — LETTERS. 4

John DiCicco — SERPENTS OF THE SANDS (AD&D® adventure, levels 6-10) They never forgot the theft. They proved it, too. 6

Christopher Perkins — A WIZARD'S FATE (AD&D adventure, levels 1-3) It took only the love of one good woman—and the hatred of one evil familiar. 20

Willie Walsh — THE WHITE BOAR OF KILFAY (AD&D adventure, levels 3-7) Even the gods slip up now and then, but few dare remind them of it. 32

Roger Baker — THEIR MASTER'S VOICE (AD&D SideTrek adventure, levels 2-4) He wanted power but settled for scraps—for now. 48

Mike Shel — THE MUD SORCERER'S TOMB (AD&D adventure, levels 10-14) The last dungeon that many heroes will ever see. 50

Like one that, on a lonely road
Doth walk in fear and dread,
And, having once turned round, walks on,
And turns no more his head;
Because he knows a frightful fiend
Doth close behind him tread.

"Rime of the Ancient Mariner," Samuel Taylor Coleridge

LETTERS

For the first time in several years, we are asking for our readers' input in a more formal way than my constant plea for letters. See page 3 of this issue for the 1992 DUNGEON® Magazine Readers' Survey. We've listed just about every possible type of adventure we could think of for you to rate your interest. These results will be tabulated and will help us decide what mix of modules to include in the future. Don't sit back and let someone else's survey influence the direction of your magazine. Fill out the survey and return it as soon as possible, and you'll also have a chance to win a one-year subscription.

A Whale of an Error

I recently read issue #34 and found several errors in the SideTrek adventure, "The Whale." The text describes the stranded animal as a sick and confused baleen whale showing no obvious signs of life. The blows of most large whales are quite visible at sea; certainly they would be even more so if you were standing next to one on a beach.

In addition, the statistics given for the whale state that the carcass would provide "enough fat, oil, meat, bone, ambergris, and baleen ivory to make a single steading rich and locally powerful . . ." Ambergris is a substance formed only in the large intestines of sperm whales, which are toothed, *not* baleen, whales. Finally, since baleen whales possess baleen plates made of a substance similar to human fingernails rather than teeth, there is no such thing as baleen ivory. Sperm whale teeth, on the other hand, are composed of ivory and were historically carved into elaborate scrimshaw.

Kristina Curren
Whale Research Group
St. John's, Newfoundland

Wolfgang has gone out to throw himself under a whale.

Put Yer Backs Into It!

This letter is in response to comments May/June 1992 "Letters" column of DUNGEON Magazine, which I find potentially damaging to the very heart of the game I have enjoyed for some 15 years now.

The question of whether the modules presented in DUNGEON Magazine should be world-specific or generic misses the mark as far as addressing the real problem. The real issue is the individual Dungeon Master's ability to think on his feet, tell a good story, and know his milieu well enough to make modules fit to it (no one has ever intended it to be the other way around). DUNGEON Magazine cannot print modules to fit every DM's campaign world specifically, and no module can be generic enough to be an automatic fit into every campaign. We simply cannot have *everything* done for us. The best solution is to present a wide variety of works to meet the public's varied needs.

One letter writer claims that SPELLJAMMER® modules are useless to him, and that another module containing a deity not present in his own pantheon is quite unworkable. To this I say that perhaps he should hand the reigns over to someone else, because if he is unable to take an idea, a story line, a particular plot with various character types and personalities and make it into something that he *can* use, he should not be a Dungeon Master.

Above all else, a Dungeon Master must be a master storyteller. In the end, what players remember most is not the color of the grass they trample underfoot, but the wicked gleam in the eyes of a serpentine red dragon as it begins to rocket down upon them out of an infinitely deep azure sky. To be a storyteller, one must be able to take an idea from any source and run with it, breathe life into it and make it his own.

Rather than take offense, think of it this way: Imagine what Japan would be today if not for any outside influence over the past 400 years or so. Cut off from all outside influences and ideas, it would now be a stagnant, third-world nation rather than an influential world power. There is a wealth of information out there—a vast wellspring of ideas in other campaigns and game settings different from your own. The basic D&D® game setting, for example, contains some fabulous work that a lot of very talented people have obviously poured their hearts and souls into. Any DM running a strictly AD&D 2nd Edition campaign would be cheating himself if he did not at least check out some of these items to see what could be done with them in his own world.

How boring would DUNGEON Magazine be if all it gave us to present to our players was "Monsters attack the party wherever they may be at a given time (DM fill in the details so we don't step on your toes any more than we already have)"? DUNGEON Magazine gives us the variety to satisfy many different tastes and styles, but not all. It is up to the Dungeon Master, as an artist of sorts, to take raw clay and create from it that which is in his own image, forging adventure from pure imagination.

Brian L. Anderson
Poolesville, Maryland

Ω

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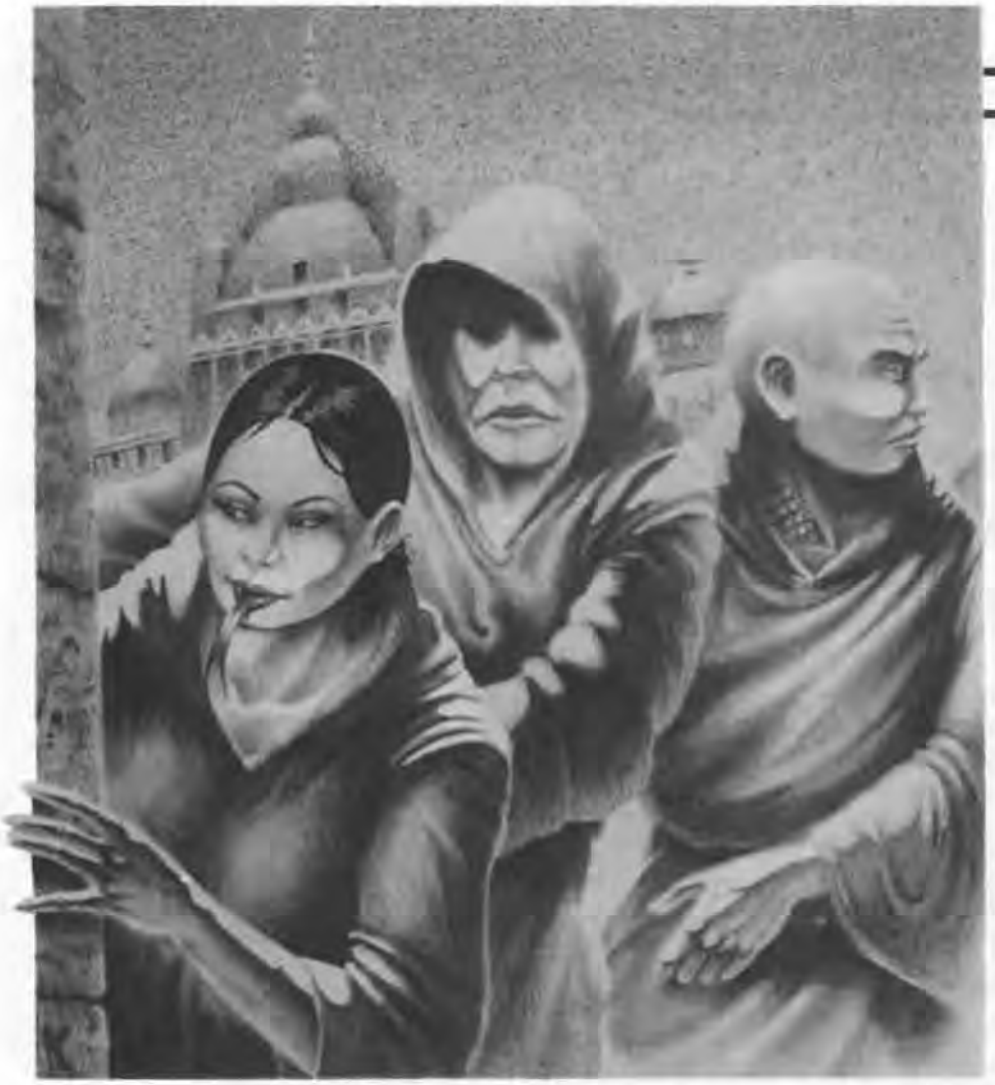


SERPENTS OF THE SANDS

BY JOHN DI CICCO

Snakes! Why does it have to be snakes?

Artwork by Bob Klasnich

John would like to thank his weekly gaming group for playtesting this adventure, giving constructive criticism, and taking the loss of some of their PCs so well. He would also like to thank Anissa Miller for doing all the typing, even the second time around.

"Serpents of the Sands" is an AD&D® 2nd Edition adventure that can easily be incorporated into any existing campaign setting with a minimum of changes. The module will best challenge a well-balanced party of 5-8 good and neutrally aligned player characters of levels 6-10 (about 50 total levels), containing at least one cleric and several fighters. The party should be well equipped with defensive and offensive magical items. The AD&D 1st Edition *Wilderness Survival Guide* provides information on the effects of desert terrain on player characters, but this manual is not necessary for play.

Because the adventure primarily deals with yuan-ti, the DM may want to read "The Ecology of the Yuan-ti" in DRAGON® Magazine #151 to gain a greater understanding of the race, though this is not necessary in order to run the adventure. The information on histachii comes from this article, which is different in some ways from the *Monstrous Compendium* entry but should not affect game play.

The yuan-ti are very complicated creatures to play because of their abilities and high intelligence, and should prove to be a challenge to even the most organized players. It is important to remember that all human-headed yuan-ti can cast the following spells once per day: *cause fear, darkness 15' radius, snake charm, sticks to snakes, neutralize poison, suggestion, polymorph other.*

The adventure begins about 20 miles east of the Avera Desert in the large town of Balthasar, which serves as a trading post for the desert folk, as well as a convenient stop for travelers and caravans. The adventurers must then travel into the desert itself to seek out the lair of the yuan-ti.

Adventure Background

Over seven years ago, a retired fighter named Thalmann and his business partner, Jacob Bakst, opened the Bhawhni Merchant Co. in Balthasar. During his previous adventuring career, Thalmann had discovered a small band

of yuan-ti. A fight erupted, resulting in the defeat of the yuan-ti and leaving only one pureblood survivor, who escaped. Her name was Shan-Che.

On the body of the largest yuan-ti abomination, Thalmann found a small magical amulet in the shape of an open, fanged snake mouth. He had it *identified* and found it to be a protective device. Unfortunately, he did not know that this amulet was also a symbol of leadership among the yuan-ti and that they would go to great pains to retrieve it.

Shan-Che spent the next seven years tracking down the location of the amulet and finally pinpointed it within Thalmann's home. Soon, she and two other yuan-ti purebloods set their plan in motion.

At first it seemed relatively easy. Thalmann's aged butler had recently died. Dranthis, a yuan-ti pureblood with impeccably forged credentials, was hired to replace him. After two months of snooping around and asking questions, Dranthis felt sure that the amulet was in a small safe built into Thalmann's bedroom wall.

The safe was guarded by a permanent *heat resistance* spell and a special *wizard lock* spell placed on it by a local mage named Rubin. These enchantments allowed only Thalmann to open the safe. Dranthis visited the mage and, feigning interest in purchasing some security-based spells, soon learned about the safe's magical protection. The pureblood quickly informed the other yuan-ti, and new plans were developed.

Shan-Che instructed the third pureblood, Sirrus, to infiltrate the town guard. When he produced carefully forged papers indicating his previous experience in a nearby town's militia, Captain Reinhart accepted Sirrus in the guard, giving him a rotation of basic duties.

The three yuan-ti waited for Sirrus to be assigned guard duty within the citadel. That night Dranthis was to drug Thalmann's nightly tea, knocking Thalmann and his cook (the only other servant) into a deep sleep. He would then use the kegs of oil located in Thalmann's cellar to ignite the house, killing Thalmann and freeing the iron safe all at once.

Sirrus had learned that, in the event of such a tragedy, any salvaged possessions (such as the safe) would be brought to the citadel to await the inheritance claims of any relatives. If no relatives appeared within 30 days, all of Thalmann's possessions would become town property. Standard procedure in these cases called for an inventory of the deceased possessions. In order to open the safe, the city officials would have to ask the mage Rubin to remove the security enchantments that he had previously placed. Later that night, Sirrus planned to break into the storage room, take the amulet, and leave as quickly as possible with his two pureblood companions, returning to their lair in the Avera Desert by *polymorphing* their horses into blue dragons.

For the DUNGEON MASTER™

The PCs become entwined in the yuan-ti's plotting during the first night they spend in the town of Balthasar. How the party gets to Balthasar is left to the DM, but the easiest way is to have the PCs spend the night there while on their way to some other destination.

During the first part of the adventure, the PCs can make observations and ask questions to learn general clues about what they are up against. Because the players have many options and can ask a variety of questions, the DM must be prepared to improvise and guide the PCs in the right direction. The major NPCs, especially Captain Reinhart and Algernon, the head cleric of the temple, are intelligent and take their jobs very seriously. They will do all they can to help the PCs.

The second part of the adventure involves the PCs' trek across the desert in search of the yuan-ti lair. The DM should keep careful track of food, water, and wood. If the PCs' guides are killed, the party may become lost in the desert for quite some time before reaching civilization.

The biggest challenge that faces the PCs is direct confrontation with the yuan-ti themselves. The yuan-ti are very intelligent opponents who realize that the PCs are dangerous to their race. The DM must look at the situation from the yuan-ti point of view. Their secret lair, which has been sanctified by their god, Sch'theraqpasst, has been discovered and the party, if allowed to survive or escape, is a direct threat to yuan-ti secrecy.

The yuan-ti have many magical abilities that they will not hesitate to use to insure extermination or enslavement of all of the PCs, as they do not want survivors to reach civilization knowing the exact location of their ancient lair. They must either rid themselves of all the PCs or spend hundreds of years searching for another location and constructing a new lair.

The Fire

During the first night the PCs spend in Balthasar, they are awakened by shouts of "Fire! Fire! At merchant Thalmann's house! Get help! Bring water! Call the guard!"

If the PCs look out their windows or run outside, they see a large fire blazing on top of a small slope on the edge of town. By this time, the fire is so large that no one can get close enough to attempt to extinguish it. A large crowd gathers, and many guardsmen arrive to keep people away from the blaze. Within 15 minutes, Rubin the mage arrives under a guard escort and casts two *affect normal fires* spells, extinguishing a large part of the flames and allowing guards to move in and extinguish the remainder of the fire within an hour.

If the PCs ask specific questions, they can get the following information from bystanders or guardsmen:

"What's going on here?"

"The house must have gone up in flames very fast. Everything was fine, then the next thing I know I turn around and the entire house is on fire."

"Whose house was this?

"It belongs . . . belonged to a merchant named Thalmann, who moved to the area about seven years ago. He's in his late forties and trades a lot of Oriental goods such as silk and spices. He never had any problems with anyone. He only kept a few servants to cook and clean (he never married, you know) and kept pretty much to himself. He owns Bhawhni Trading Company in the center of town."

After spending an hour in the area, the PCs spot an overweight, middle-aged man who is gesturing excitedly while talking to the guards. This is Jacob Bakst, Thalmann's business partner, who was summoned to identify any bodies found in the wreckage. The guard will not let anyone near Jacob.

Jacob Bakst, merchant: AL N; AC 10; MV 9; 0-level human; hp 5; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type (unarmed); ML 9. Jacob is a fat man in his fifties. He is balding and breathes heavily when he speaks.

When the guards begin to clear the

rubble, they find the iron safe. Sirrus and three other guards quickly bring it to the citadel and do not return. The remains of Thalmann's body are found shortly thereafter. Jacob can identify his business partner from a ring on a charred finger. He knows Thalmann employed two servants, who lived with him. Immediately, the guardsmen double their efforts to clear rubble away in hope of finding a survivor in the cellar. Miraculously, they do, pulling poor old Rigby from under a work table, barely alive.

Rigby, cook: AL NG; AC 10; MV 12; 0-level human; hp 1 (4 if healed); THAC0 20; #AT 1, Dmg by weapon type (unarmed); ML 9. Rigby is a 5'2"-tall man in his mid-sixties. He cooked all of Thalmann's meals but had little else to do with the running of the household. The injured cook is immediately taken to a local temple for healing.

PCs to the Rescue

The next encounter is designed to give the PCs the opportunity to gain the trust of Captain Reinhart. If they do nothing to help the captain in the following encounter, the adventure will end here because he will not offer a passive party the job of pursuing the yuan-ti (described later).

In Captain Reinhart's career of bringing men to justice, he has made many enemies, but one in particular bears him an undying hatred. Agar was a hardened dwarven criminal sentenced to 20 years of hard labor for single-handedly assaulting and robbing a caravan merchant and six guards. Agar completed his sentence the previous week, and this bitter dwarf can't wait to get his hands on Reinhart.

Before traveling to Balthasar from the labor camp, Agar rounded up eight of his old dwarven buddies to give him a hand in teaching Reinhart his last lesson. The band then traveled to Balthasar and waited for an opportune time to dispatch the captain. They choose the morning after merchant Thalmann's house burns to the ground to launch their attack.

At some time that morning, perhaps while the PCs are shopping or exploring in the town, the adventurers hear a jumble of shouts and creative insults from out in the street. Agar has confronted Reinhart as the captain walked to the citadel from the inn where he had breakfast. After 10 rounds of working himself up into a frenzy by cursing and threatening the captain, Agar charges Reinhart while his eight dwarven companions fight the six guardsmen who accompany the captain.

If the PCs immediately investigate the shouting, they can reach the scene in four rounds. If they reach the scene within 10 rounds, they see a ragged band of dwarves standing in the middle of the road, their backs toward the PCs, blocking the guardsmen's way. If the PCs reach the scene after 10 rounds, they see a crowd of townspeople running for their lives while the dwarves and the guardsmen engage in melee in the street.

Captain Reinhart: AL LN; AC −2; MV 6; F9; hp 71; THAC0 12; #AT 2/1 or 3/2; Dmg by weapon type; S 17, D 15, C 16, I 14, W 15, Ch 17; ML 15; field plate armor, *shield +2, morning star +1* (specialization), bastard sword, weapon and shield style specialization (as per the *Complete Fighter's Handbook*, page 63). Reinhart is in his forties. He is a commanding figure who can take charge of any situation when dealing with others.

Guardsmen (6): AL LN; AC 4; MV 9; F3; hp 15; THAC0 18; #AT 3/2 or 2; Dmg by weapon type; ML 12; chain mail, shield, long sword (specialization), short bow, 20 flight arrows.

Agar (dwarf berserker): AL CE; AC 4; MV 6; F6; hp 59 (64 while berserk); THAC0 15; #AT 5/2; Dmg by weapon type; S 18/14, D 15, C 18; XP 650; chain mail, two short swords, knife, garrotte, 11 gp, 16 sp. Agar specializes in the short sword, and two-weapon style fighting (*CFH,* page 64), which gives him only a −2 penalty to hit with his left hand. Agar is a berserker (*CFH,* pages 19-22).

Dwarven thugs (8): AL NE; AC 5; MV 6; F3; hp 30, 24, 18 (×6); THAC0 18; #AT 3/2; Dmg by weapon type; XP 120 (×2), 65 (×6). All specialize in the war hammer and wear chain mail. Each carries 1-6 gp and 2-12 sp.

If the party does not help Captain Reinhart and his men, the fight lasts about 10 rounds. The dwarves are defeated, but three guardsmen lie dead and Reinhart and the remaining guardsmen are badly hurt.

If the adventurers help defeat the dwarves, they gain the trust of Reinhart and a future job offer. The captain thanks the PCs for their help and invites them to dine with him at 9:00 P.M. in the town's best restaurant, The Eagle's Perch.

If the party accepts Reinhart's offer, they arrive at The Eagle's Perch and are escorted to a private room by a barmaid. They are informed that the captain will be arriving late, and that they should begin the meal without him. The captain will pay for their meals when he arrives. The food and service in the restaurant are excellent. Unless the DM wishes to create a menu, the PCs are served soup, beef and vegetables.

An hour later, Captain Reinhart steps into the room. The PCs may not recognize him immediately, as he has changed from his uniform into a suit of fashionable clothing. Reinhart pulls a chair up to the table and begins to speak.

"Please accept my apologies for my tardiness, but a problem has arisen that may interest your group. Not more than three hours ago, the citadel storage area was broken into by one of our own men. Although there were many valuables, the only thing that was stolen was a small amulet in the shape of an open-fanged mouth, like that of a snake. The thief, a guardsman named Sirrus, killed both of the guards on duty with him and made his way past the two guards standing watch at the citadel gate.

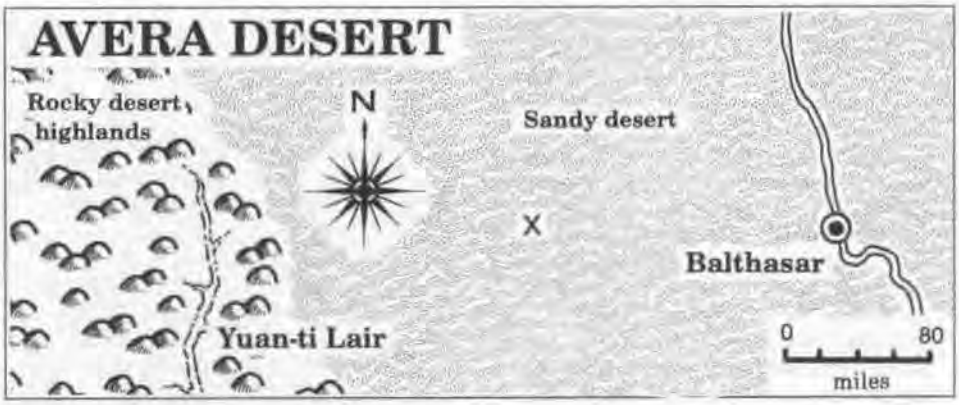
"Algernon Barnock, the head priest of the temple, successfully scried on Sirrus and found him to be riding through the skies on a blue bat-winged reptilian creature that we fear may be a dragon. But it doesn't end there. Two others accompanied him, riding on their own reptiles: an Oriental woman and a man who fits the description of Dranthis, merchant Thalmann's newly hired butler. We were able to confirm the identification with Rigby, Thalmann's cook.

"As you probably know, Thalmann was killed last night in the fire that destroyed his home. The fire freed the iron safe that he had built into the wall of his bedroom. When the safe was brought to the citadel to await any claim by Thalmann's heirs, we had to call on Rubin, a local mage, to remove the security enchantments that he had previously

placed on it. The safe was then opened and its contents inventoried. One of the items within was the amulet that was stolen.

"During further scrying, we saw the three conspirators land near a dry riverbed in the Avera Desert. We watched Dranthis eat a live bird. His jaw seemed to dislocate, and he swallowed it whole. They may have known that they were being scried on, because they did not move from that spot. Subsequently, all further scrying attempts failed.

"We want to send an expedition into the desert to locate these three individuals and bring them to justice. If you're interested in the job, you'll get a 500-gp reward for each of the three you bring in, and any treasure you find is yours to keep, of course. You will be given guides, camels, and enough food, water, and firewood for the trip. What do you say?"



The previously mentioned plans of the yuan-ti went as expected, with the exception of Rigby surviving the fire. The yuan-ti know something is wrong because, when they landed at the dry riverbed, they sensed that they were being scried upon. They waited for the scrying to end before entering their lair, knowing that the chaos of magical energy in the temple areas of their lair would foil any further scrying attempts.

The party might have questions that are not be covered here so the DM may have to improvise. The captain's offer of 500 gp stands firm; if asked the meaning of "brought to justice," he says, "I would like them brought back alive, if possible." The captain would like the PCs to begin their journey as quickly as possible, as the trek across the desert is not a short one.

The party may want to interview certain NPCs. The following is a list of NPCs and the information the party may gain from each. Captain Reinhart can direct the adventurers to any of these NPCs and has already learned most of the information below.

Rigby, merchant Thalmann's servant, can be found recovering in the temple. He can tell the party the following:

When he awoke on the night of the fire, the entire house was in flames, especially the interior floors and walls. All exits were blocked by fire, but because his bedroom was on the first floor, Rigby was able to make it to the cellar entrance and hide under a large workbench in one corner. Fortunately, the house did not collapse into the cellar, thanks to Rubin's efforts, and the fire was extinguished before it spread into the cellar.

Thalmann hired Dranthis to replace his deceased butler about two months ago. The new man seemed to be well-mannered and polite. Thalmann had taken a liking to Dranthis because of their joint fascination with Oriental culture, especially art. Other than occasionally conversing with Thalmann about the merchant's past adventuring days, Dranthis generally kept to himself. Rigby does not know anything specific about Thalmann's past, other than that he was a successful adventurer.

Rigby says that, after he gave his testimony to the guardsmen, he overheard the captain tell a subordinate, "Two suspects . . ." and "Dranthis and Jacob Bakst." According to Rigby, Jacob had a lot to gain from Thalmann's death, but since the new butler is suspiciously missing, the guards have put all their energies into locating Dranthis.

Jacob Bakst, Thalmann's business partner and partial owner of Bhawhni Merchant Co., can be found at his residence.

Jacob realizes that he had a very good motive for killing Thalmann (the inheritance of Thalmann's half of the merchant company), but his wife can swear that he was home the entire night. He has never previously broken the law and is quite annoyed with the whole situation.

He thinks Thalmann's adventuring past may have something to do with this whole mess. Jacob is the only person who knows any specifics about Thalmann's former career. He knows that his partner was a retired adventurer who was originally from the lands across the Avera Desert. Thalmann fled his homeland because he was wanted for the murder of a man he found with his wife-to-be, so he traveled to Balthasar to begin a new life.

Rubin, the local mage who placed and removed the security enchantments on Thalmann's safe and helped to extinguish the fire that engulfed Thalmann's home, can be found at his residence.

Rubin has been questioned by the guard captain but does have one additional piece of information to offer the party. He remembers a man with a clean-shaven head (Dranthis) visiting him about two weeks ago. The man was interested in purchasing magical security for a chest and inquired about all the different possible protection enchantments available for such a task. The man left to "think about his options" and was never seen again.

Rubin also witnessed the captain and the guard write down a specific list of what was in the safe, after the security enchantments were removed. He signed the paper as an eyewitness, then left. All he knows is that there were mostly jewels in the safe.

Rubin: AL NG; AC 1; MV 12; M9; hp 26; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg by spell or weapon type; D 16, I 17; ML 12. Spells: *affect normal fires, comprehend languages, detect magic, identify; knock* (×2), *wizard lock; dispel magic* (×3); *remove curse, stoneskin; teleport.* He carries a *staff of striking* (17 charges) and wears *bracers of defense AC 4* and a *ring of protection +1.* Rubin is an attractive young man with long black hair tied in a pony tail.

Algernon Barnock is the head priest of the temple and can always be found there. After the use of various divina-

tion spells, Algernon was able to learn some very general information about merchant Thalmann's killers. He has learned about a hidden lair located near the dry riverbed in the Avera Desert. In addition to the three thieves, the lair also seems to be inhabited by a group of organized evil creatures.

Algernon Barnock: AL LN; AC 4; MV 12; C10; hp 63; THAC0 14; #AT 1; Dmg by spell or weapon type; I 15, W 18. Spells: *combine* (×2), *cure light wounds* (×2), *detect magic* (×2), *detect charm, enthrall, hold person* (×2), *know alignment, silence 15' radius, dispel magic, remove curse, speak with dead, detect lie, divination, commune, magic font.*

Algernon is an older man in his sixties with a very long, thin, gray beard. He has a *robe of protection +3,* a *ring of protection +3,* a *periapt of wound closure,* and a *quarterstaff +2.*

Captain Reinhart and Algernon can warn the PCs about some of the common hazards associated with traveling in the desert, such as wearing armor in the hot sun (*WSG,* pages 21-29). They advise traveling only at night through the Avera Desert, a mix of dunes and rocklands. Small, isolated groups of nomads live in the rocklands. They are usually friendly and occasionally journey to Balthasar to trade. If the PCs can keep track of rations and wood, their only problems should come from the wandering inhabitants of the desert.

As guides, Captain Reinhart provides four nomads who speak their own language; each has a 10% chance of also speaking Common. The guides are led by a 1st-level fighter who can speak fluent Common. Five dromedary camels are provided to carry food, water, and wood for a two-month trip.

Guide leader: AL NG; AC 10; MV 12; F1; hp 9; THAC0 20; #AT 1 (or 2 with bow); Dmg by weapon type; ML 11. He carries a scimitar and a short bow with 10 flight arrows and 10 sheaf arrows. His nonweapon proficiencies are direction sense, desert survival, animal handling, and fire-building.

Guides (4): AL NG; AC 10; MV 12; 0-level humans; hp 5 each; THAC0 20; #AT 1 (or 2 with bow); Dmg by weapon type; ML 10. All carry scimitars and short bows with 12 flight arrows.

The following is a brief timeline of the first day to help the DM keep track of events.

Random Encounters in the Avera Desert

(Roll 1d8+1d12)

The chance for an encounter is 1 in 12. Roll three times daily (morning, evening, and night). Sighting distance is 50-300 yards.

2. Oasis. The PCs arrive at a small oasis that comes and goes with the seasons. Here they will be able to replenish water as needed, and each person can forage about two days' worth of food for each four hours spent searching (double the amount of food if that person has desert survival training). Double the chances for further random encounters while the PCs stay at the oasis.

3. Sandling: INT non; AL N; AC 3; MV 12, burrow 6; HD 4; hp 30; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 2-16; SD invisible to infravision, immune to mind-influencing spells; SZ L; ML 7; XP 270; MC2. A random PC accidentally steps on this creature, causing it to attack (−2 to PC's surprise roll).

4. Scorpion, giant (1-4): INT non; AL N; AC 3; MV 15; HD 5+5; hp 36 each; THAC0 15; #AT 3; Dmg 1-10/1-10/1-4; SA poison sting; SZ M; ML 11; XP 650; MC1. These monsters immediately attack any creature that infringes on their territory.

5. Lizard, fire: INT animal; AL N; AC 3; MV 9; HD 10; hp 59; THAC0 11; #AT 3; Dmg 1-8/1-8/2-16; SA breathe fire while biting for 2-12 hp damage (save vs. breath weapon for half damage); SD immune to fire; SZ G; ML 12; XP 5,000; MC1. This lizard has a 50% chance to attack at once.

6. Camel, dromedary (4-16): INT animal; AL N; AC 7; MV 21; HD 3; hp 15 each; THAC0 16; #AT 1; Dmg 1-4; SA spitting; SZ L; ML 3; XP 65; MC1 (Animal, herd). These camels are untamed.

7. Snake, spitting: INT animal; AL N; AC 5; MV 12; HD 4+2; hp 21; THAC0 17; #AT 2; Dmg 1-3; SA spit poison up to 30'; SZ M; ML 9; XP 650; MC1. This snake will attack only if approached within 10'.

8. Scorpion, huge (1-4): INT non; AL N; AC 4; MV 12; HD 4+4; hp 24 each; THAC0 15; #AT 3; Dmg 1-8/1-8/1-3; SA poison sting; SZ M; ML 10; XP 420; MC1. These creatures attack intruders on sight.

9. Dragon, blue. The PCs spot a blue bat-winged creature high in the sky. The flier wheels about and swiftly glides out of sight. No statistics are given because the dragon will not attack. This is one of the three horses *polymorphed* into blue dragons that the yuan-ti rode to their lair. The yuan-ti now send out the dragons to scout the party's position.

10. Dervishes. This well-supplied group travels with 12 dromedary camels (see previous statistics). The group is looking for a lost temple dedicated to their god, Anubis. If the PCs have already encountered the ruined temple (encounter roll 15) and tell them dervishes how to find it, they will be very grateful. The leader offers to heal any wounded PCs. If the PCs found a scarab in the temple ruins and offer it to the dervishes, the leader rewards the PCs with his potion of *extra healing.*

The DM may opt to have the PCs automatically encounter the ancient ruins at some convenient time before they encounter the dervishes. This group of dervishes may be encountered only once; if rolled again, treat as no encounter.

Dervish leader: AL LG; AC 10; MV 12; C3; hp 13; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg by spell or weapon type; W 17; ML 20. Spells: *bless, cure light wounds* (×3); *dust devil, hold person; slow poison.* He carries a staff and a potion of *extra healing.*

Dervish followers (10): 0-level human; hp 6 (×3), 5 (×2), 4 (×4), 3; #AT 1 (or 2 with bow); Dmg by weapon type; see dervish leader for complete statistics. Each carries a scimitar and a short bow with 12 flight arrows.

11. Nomads. These nomads trade with Balthasar. They travel with 16-20 dromedary camels (see previous statistics) and are heading either to or

returning from Balthasar (50% chance of each). They trade pottery, exotic fabrics, craft items, and cheap jewelry for metal utensils and tools. They carry goods totalling about 1,200 gp in value. The nomads are always friendly and ready to make a deal.

Nomad leader: AL NG; AC 10; MV 12; F1; hp 9; THAC0 20; #AT 1 (or 2 with bow); Dmg by weapon type; ML 12; khopesh sword, short bow with 20 flight arrows.

Nomad traders (11-20): 0-level human; hp 4 each; ML 10; see nomad leader for complete statistics and equipment.

12. Abandoned Camp. The PCs come across the remains of a campfire and the tracks of men and camels that arrive and leave in random directions.

13. Footprints (25%)/**animal tracks** (75%). The PCs come across either 11-20 human-sized boot prints accompanied by 6-24 camel tracks or the tracks of a creature on the random encounter chart (DM's choice).

14. Snake, poisonous: INT animal; AL N; AC 6; MV 15; HD 2+1; hp 16; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1; SA poison; SZ S; ML 8; XP 175; MC1. This creature attacks only if molested.

15. Ruined Temple. In the distance, the PCs spot a small stone structure shaped like a pyramid and partially buried in the sand. This is an abandoned temple to Anubis (recognized with a successful religion proficiency check) and is in a total state of ruin. Wind-eroded remains of statues and blocks lie scattered in the sands around the base of this 100′ × 100′ structure. The structure itself stands 30′ high.

There is an entrance to the pyramid in the midpoint of the south wall, 5′ above the sands. Inside, a 40′ long corridor leads to a 20′ × 20′ chamber. Broken pottery lies scattered about on the floor amid thin patches of sand. A rather plain closed sarcophagus rests against the north wall of the chamber. It is empty. The walls and ceiling of the corridor and room are inscribed with hieroglyphics.

If the floor is carefully searched, the PCs can find a small nonmagical scarab with hieroglyphic writing on its underside. The writing deals with the burial of a famous holy man. This is the scarab that the dervishes (random encounter 10) seek. The DM may opt to automatically have this encounter occur before the PCs encounter the dervishes.

The temple may be encountered only once. If rolled again, treat as no encounter.

16. Ant Lion: INT animal; AL N; AC 2; MV 9, burrow 1; HD 8; hp 60; THAC0 12; #AT 1; Dmg 5-20; SA automatic damage after first successful attack; SZ L; ML 8; XP 2,000; MC2.

The PCs notice a deep tapering pit, 60′ in diameter. If anyone comes within 2′ of the edge, they risk a 20% chance of slipping and falling to the bottom of the funnel where the ant lion waits. If someone enters the funnel, the chances for sliding to the bottom are raised to 50%.

17. Lizard, giant (1-3): INT non; AL N; AC 5; MV 15; HD 3+1; hp 16 each; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1-8; SA on a natural 20, victim suffers double damage and is trapped in the lizard's mouth, taking double damage each round thereafter; SZ H; ML 10; XP 270; MC1. The lizards attack only 10% of the time if not molested.

18. Centipede, huge (2-20): INT non; AL N; AC 9; MV 21; hp 1; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg nil; SA poison; SZ T; ML 6; XP 35; MC1. The PCs encounter a nest of these large insects. If the party stays more than 50′ away, the PCs run no risk of being attacked; otherwise, there is a 50% chance that the centipedes will attack.

19. Sand storm. The wind gradually begins to pick up. A PC with desert survival proficiency immediately recognizes the potential for a violent sandstorm. If the PCs do not immediately find cover or set up camp, they become disoriented and the pack animals panic as a whirlwind of sand passes through the area for 2d10+10 minutes.

20. Oasis. See random encounter 2.

1:00 A.M.: Thalmann's house burns.
3:00 A.M.: The iron safe is brought to the citadel.
Later that morning: The fight between Captain Reinhart and Agar occurs.
3:00 P.M.: Rubin opens the safe at the citadel.
7:00 P.M.: Sirrus steals the amulet and escapes.
9:00 P.M.: The party dines at The Eagle's Perch.
10:00 P.M.: Captain Reinhart arrives and offers the party the job.

The Avera Desert

The Avera Desert is primarily made up of two types of terrain. The eastern half of the desert is covered by sand dunes littered with cacti and other desert scrub. To the west, the nomads dwell in rocky desert highlands. In this area of rough sandstone hills and scattered dunes, most of the rock is worn smooth from constant wind erosion. A bit more vegetation grows here, but it is not much to speak of.

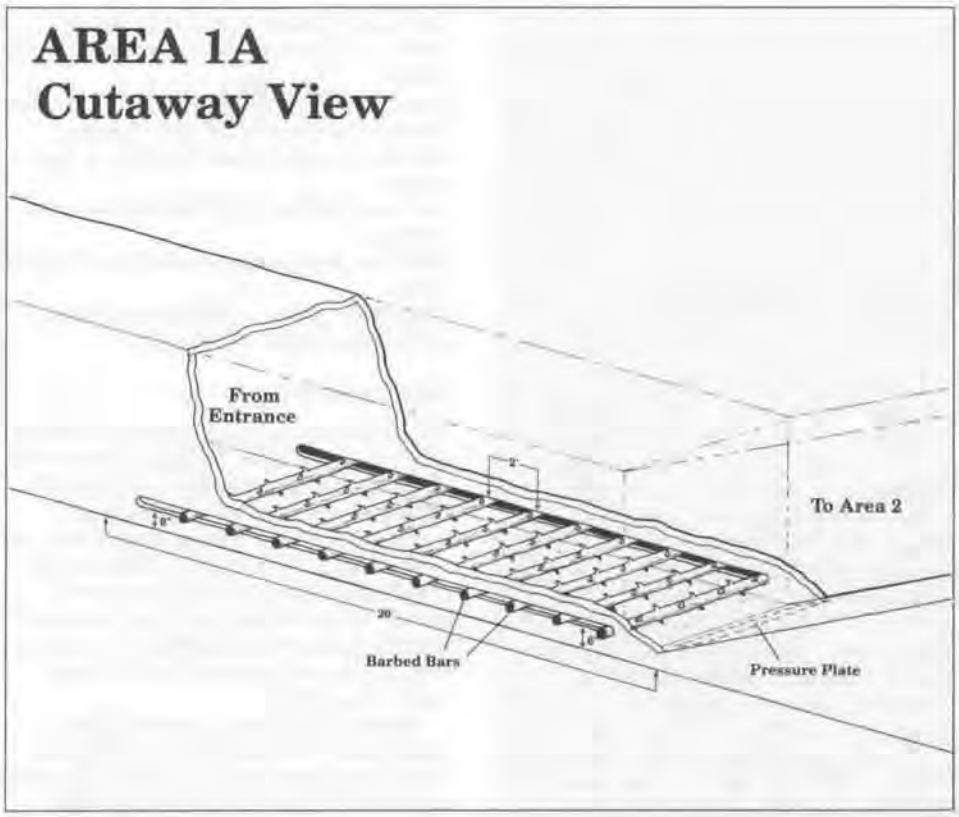
The average temperature at noon reaches 110°F. At night, the temperature drops drastically, reaching an average of 40°F. Movement through the sandy desert is at one-third the normal movement rate, while movement through rocky desert terrain is cut in half.

At the point marked X lies a large permanent oasis where most nomads stop while traveling across the desert. This fertile oasis supports many fruit-producing trees and is a small island of life amid the unrelenting sand. While the PCs are within one mile of the oasis, double the chances for random encounters (see sidebar).

Lair of the Yuan-Ti

This lair was built some 1,200 years ago, after these particular yuan-ti were driven from their original home in a more civilized region. Led by Yith'sehta, a strange abomination/greater medusa cross, the yuan-ti enslaved the local nomads, using them to build their lair over the centuries. The yuan-ti also had a darker use for the nomads, using them to repopulate the ranks of the yuan-ti in a ritual called the Night of the Venom (which will be discussed in detail later on).

The yuan-ti lair is located in the desert highlands, in a small ravine through which runs the dry, rocky riverbed. If



the ravine is searched, the chances of finding the hidden entrance to the lair is the same as that of finding a secret door. If the PCs approach within 75′ of the lair, they are attacked by three blue dragons (actually the horses that the yuan-ti *polymorphed* into dragon form for a convenient flight over the desert).

Buried under the sands of some of the larger dunes (giving a −4 to PC's surprise rolls), two of the reptiles stick their heads out and roar, while the largest one, in a burst of sand, takes flight into the skies. The next round, the two on the ground take flight while the third takes a position to dive. The next round all three dive, gaining a +2 to hit, and engage in melee.

Blue dragons, very young (3): INT animal; AL LE; AC 2; MV 9, fly 30 (C), burrow 4; HD 2; hp 12, 10, 8; THAC0 19; #AT 3; Dmg 1d8+2/1d8+2/3d8+2; SD immune to electricity; SZ G; ML 16; MC. They have no breath weapon because they are actually *polymorphed* horses. If slain, they immediately revert to their natural horse forms.

Entrance Level

Once the PCs find the hidden entrance, they may enter the lair, but the yuan-ti will be expecting them. All of the Entrance Level is unlit, and the ceiling is 15′ high. It is much more comfortable in the upper levels of the lair than outside in the desert: cooler during the day and warmer during the night. Armor can be worn without adverse effects.

1. Entrance. The entrance is of finely hewn stone. The floor is covered in a thin layer of sand, blown in from the outside. The entire hallway gradually slopes downward, and a strong stench can be noticed as the PCs travel away from the entrance.

1A. Trap. Ten wickedly barbed bars, spaced 2′ apart, lie across the last 20′ of the corridor floor. Their ends lie in long slots, 6″ above the base of each wall, allowing the bars to move back and forth parallel to the floor. The pressure plate to activate this trap lies on the floor just after the 10th (last) bar. Triggering the trap with only 10 lbs. of pressure causes the bars to rotate and quickly slide back and forth along their tracks. Anyone caught within these bars when the trap is activated must make a dexterity check on 1d20 at a −3 penalty to avoid taking 2-5 hp damage each round. A check must be made for every bar a PC tries to avoid (to safely get across the entire area requires 10 dexterity checks).

The bars halt after 15 rounds. If something is used to jam the bars, make a saving throw vs. crushing blow for the object. If the save is successful, the bars stop; if not, the object is destroyed.

2. Guard Room. A putrid stench comes from the guards who inhabit this area.

Trolls (2): INT low; AL CE; AC 4; MV 12; HD 6+6; hp 52, 46; THAC0 13; #AT 3; Dmg 1d4+4/1d4+4/1d8+4; SA severed members continue to attack; SD regeneration; SZ L; ML 14; XP 1,400; MC 1.

These trolls are a bit more intelligent than their fellows. Recently captured by the yuan-ti and talked into guarding this area in exchange for food and water, they quietly wait in ambush. When the first PC enters the room, one troll attacks while the other steps on the pressure plate to set off the trap in area 1A (if the lead PC has not already done so). This may catch people in the middle of the bars or simply create a barrier to split up the party.

If the trolls can split the party, they will not pursue the PCs. Instead, they wait in hiding for the PCs to come to them, using the same tactics as described above. If the PCs insult or taunt the trolls, there is a 10% cumulative chance per round that the trolls will lose their patience and attack the party.

The only contents of the room are two smelly troll nests.

3. False Altar Room. This smooth stone room is bare except for a small altar of basalt to the west. The altar is 3′ high, 2′ wide, and 4′ long. A small compartment can easily be found in the back of the rock. Inside is an ivory scroll tube (value 100 gp) that contains a *cursed* scroll purposely placed here by the yuan-ti. The scroll causes its reader to immediately go insane (save vs. spells at −4 to avoid) and attack all living creatures. Spell-casters may use spells to attack. The effects last for 15 rounds and can be canceled with a *remove curse* or *dispel magic* spell.

4. Trapped Corridor. This corridor contains a false door that is trapped. If the ceiling is closely inspected with a good light source, tiny, evenly spaced holes can be seen to run the entire length of the corridor. If the door is opened, 1-3 small poisoned darts shoot out at each PC in the corridor. Each dart has a THAC0 of 10 and does 1 hp damage per hit; the PC must also save vs. Type A poison (onset 10-30 min; Dmg 15/0). When the door is closed again, the trap resets.

5. Skeleton Room. This secret door opens into a dark, musty room. Nine human skeletons are chained to the walls in various positions. Some of the skeletons appear to have cleanly severed bones (the yuan-ti maim their slaves to make escape difficult). All of the bones of the skeletons have been strung together with metal wire to keep them from falling apart.

There is nothing else of note in this room other than the secret door leading to area 6. One of the skeletons hangs right on this secret door. To open it, the iron ring on the wall that holds the chain connected to the skeleton's left arm must be twisted to the left. When this is done, the door slides open with a loud, grating sound. If the ring is twisted to the right, a small poisoned needle shoots out of the skeleton's left eye socket (THAC0 10). If the needle hits, the victim must make a saving throw vs. poison (Type C: onset 2-5 min; Dmg 25/2-8).

6. Ramp. This gently sloping spiral ramp leads 40′ below to area 7 on the Guardian Level.

Guardian Level

The ceiling on this level is 20′ high, and all areas are dimly lit by torches unless otherwise noted.

7. Guard Room. A sour, burnt smell wafts down the corridor as the PCs approach this area. A eight-headed pyrohydra guards this large room. The monster will not attack any reptilian or yuan-ti because it has a dim intelligence and sees such creatures as its keepers, who bring it food regularly. Massive chains attached to the eastern wall restrain this creature from reaching more than 10′ into the western corridor.

Pyrohydra: INT semi; AL N; AC 5; MV 9; HD 8; hp 64; THAC0 12; #AT 8 (4 heads against a single opponent); Dmg 1-8; SA each head can breathe fire for 8 hp damage, twice a day (save vs. breath weapon for half damage); SZ G; ML 9; XP 4,000; MC1 (Hydra).

This creature is chained to the west wall. If the PCs attack it from a distance, the pyrohydra retreats around the corner.

On the south wall are a set of double doors fashioned of bronze, standing 12′ high. They silently open inward if pushed.

From behind the secret door, Sirrus spies on the PCs through a small hole. If the PCs begin to search for secret doors, or he thinks that there is a chance he will be discovered, Sirrus flees down to the Temple Level via the ramp at area 9 and alerts the ambushers in areas 16 and 17.

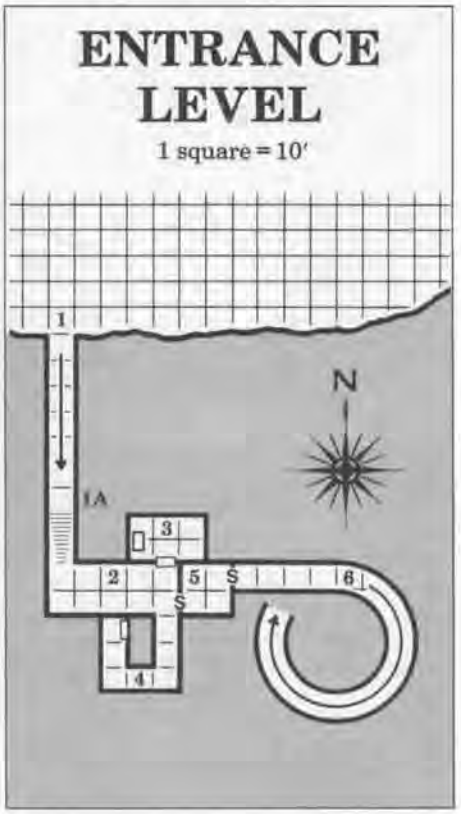
8. Lesser Temple. This area is the lesser temple of the yuan-ti. The entire room is dimly lit by a few torches. *Light* or *continual light* spells will be dimmed to half effectiveness from magical energies left behind from ages ago.

The walls, floors, and ceiling area are of polished black marble. Six gigantic black marble statues of writhing serpents reach up to the ceiling, acting as pillars to support the ceiling. A mural on the west wall depicts a great ebony winged serpent, standing 15′ tall. Its wings cover the entire length of the south wall, while it gazes down toward the middle of the room. Its eyes glow a deep reddish orange from two small braziers that are placed within the eye sockets.

The entire west wall is a horrid bas-relief scene of hundreds of mutated snakemen that slither and intertwine in a mass slaughter of humanity. Some of the humans have been run through with exotic weapons, while others are being constricted or feasted on by a hungry mass of these loathsome creatures.

To either side of the double doors, a 10′-tall marble statue of a yuan-ti abomination is set into the wall, 3′ above the floor. Each snakeman wields a naginata.

In the center of the floor, an elaborate winch dangles a sarcophagus-shaped cage high over a pit. This cage can be lowered into the 20′-deep pit, which crawls with hundreds of writhing poisonous snakes.

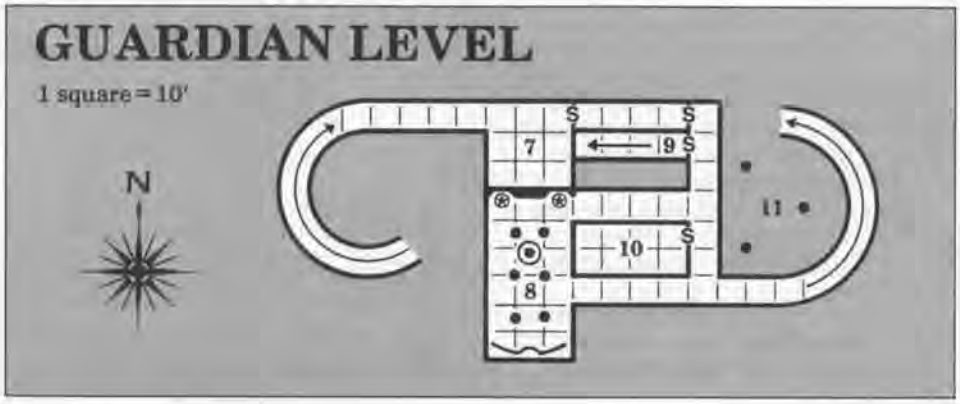


Snakes, poisonous (450): INT animal; AL N; AC 6; MV 15; HD 2+1; hp 9 each; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1 plus poison; SA poison; SZ S; ML 8; XP 175 each; MC1.

9. Ramp. This ramp leads downward to area 13 on the Temple Level.

10. Torture Room. This unlit room emits a putrid smell when the PCs open the doors. The room contains various implements of torture: a rack, a small guillotine, a fire pit with branding irons, thumb screws, flogs, etc.

Hiding among the torture devices is a mage named Alibardicus, who was *polymorphed* into a pit viper by Shan-Che. The mage's party discovered this lair, invaded it, and was defeated in the lesser temple (area 8) by the three purebloods (Dranthis, Sirrus, and Shan-Che). During the fight, Alibardicus was *polymorphed* and fled before the yuan-ti could find him. The rest of the party members were killed. He has been hiding, foraging for food and water, and hoping someone would rescue him for the past four months. While living in



area 10, he has witnessed horrible acts of torture on slaves.

As soon as the PCs enter this area, Alibardicus slowly slithers toward the first PC. With a piece of coal in his mouth, he attempts to scrawl the word "Help" on the stone floor. If the PCs notice that the snake is trying to tell them something, Alibardicus tries to explain his present condition.

Alibardicus (pit viper form): INT exceptional; AL NG; AC 6; MV 15; HD 3d4; hp 8; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1 plus poison; SA poison; SZ S; ML 8.

Alibardicus (human form): AL NG; AC 10; MV 12; M3; hp 8; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg by spell or weapon type (no spells memorized); ML 8. He carries a traveling spell book (which was *polymorphed* with him) containing *magic missile, sleep, light, protection from evil,* and *web.*

If Alibardicus is returned to his human form, he appears to be a young man in his early twenties. He is rather a mess in his present state, as he has not bathed for quite some time.

Alibardicus is familiar with all of the Entrance Level and areas 7, 8, 10, and 11 of the Guardian Level. He will join the party for the duration of the adventure (and perhaps even longer) if he is returned to his normal form.

11. Ramp. This large, plain chamber contains a ramp leading downward. The entire space is open, allowing a view to the next level, 30' below. A stone railing lines the balcony but does not line the ramp itself. Three pillars of green marble rise from the floor of the Temple Level below (total height 50'). Each pillar is carved to resemble two snakes intertwined with each other, heads pressed against the ceiling as if holding it up.

Temple Level

All ceilings on this level are 12' high, and all rooms are dimly lit by torches unless otherwise noted.

12. Trapped Corridor. A trapped false door blocks the end of this long sloping corridor. When the door is opened, a rumbling sound fills the first 20' of the corridor. A few seconds later, a 7'-diameter boulder drops out of a secret compartment in the ceiling at the area marked X. The huge rock rolls down the corridor at a movement rate of 12, inflicting 6-60 hp damage to each PC caught between it and the end of the corridor (save vs. petrification for half damage; anyone who fails the saving throw must also make saving throws vs. crushing blow for equipment).

13. Ramp. This ramp leads up to area 9 of the Guardian Level.

14. Trapped False Doors. These false doors are trapped. When opened, each triggers the 10' × 10' section of the floor directly in front of it to swing open, revealing a 20'-deep pit filled with spikes. A PC who falls into a pit suffers 2-12 hp damage from the fall and is impaled on 2-5 spikes for an additional 2-8 hp damage per spike. The pit doors are counterweighted to shut after they have been opened. The only way to open the pits is to open the false doors.

15. Empty Room. The secret door leading to this area opens with a grating sound that alerts the yuan-ti in areas 16 and 17. A wave of heat rolls over the PCs as soon as the secret door is opened. The temperature within the room is about 20° higher because the hot mineral springs located on this level warm the air.

The yuan-ti in areas 16 and 17 wait in ambush around the corners. They attack as soon as the party attempts to enter either area.

16. Ambush. After being alerted by Sirrus, three yuan-ti wait in this room to ambush the PCs.

Yuan-ti abomination: INT genius; AL CE; AC 0; MV 9; HD 9; hp 61; THAC0 11; #AT 2; Dmg 1-10 (bite) and by weapon type; MR 20%; SZ L; ML 15; XP 3,000; MC1. This abomination carries a katana and wields it with both hands (Dmg 2-12). It can also bite. The red and black striped monster appears to be all snake except for its arms.

Yuan-ti half-breed: MV 12; HD 7; hp 48; THAC0 13; SZ M; *spear +2,* two sai (1-4 hp); XP 2,000; other statistics as for yuan-ti abomination. This humanoid has a snake head and is covered in hard black scales.

Dranthis, yuan-ti pureblood: AC 4; MV 12; HD 6; hp 38; THAC0 15; SA spells; SZ M; ML 14; XP 2,000; other statistics as for yuan-ti abomination; two short swords, two daggers. Dranthis can cast the following spells once per day: *cause fear, darkness 15' radius, snake charm, sticks to snakes, neutralize poison, suggestion,* and *polymorph other.*

Dranthis appears to be in his mid-forties and is in very good physical condition. His head is clean shaven and he has a few patches of scales on his back that resemble scars when viewed from a distance of a foot or more.

Dranthis stays behind the abomination and the half-breed while he attempts to cast spells. The first spell he casts is *stick to snakes* on the pile of sticks that he has nearby. He then attempts to *polymorph* the strongest PC fighter into an iguana. If there is time, he attempts to cast a *darkness* spell on the eyes of any spell-caster. He will use *suggestion* to try to get a threatening PC to surrender and lay down his weapons.

17. Ambush. After Sirrus alerted them to the threat of intruders, these three yuan-ti rushed here to set up an ambush for the PCs.

Yuan-ti half-breed: AC 4; MV 9; HD 8; hp 41; THAC0 13; #AT 3; Dmg 1-10/1-4 and by weapon type; SA constriction; XP 2,000; see area 16 for complete statistics; six shuriken (1-4 hp), scimitar. This green humanoid has a snake

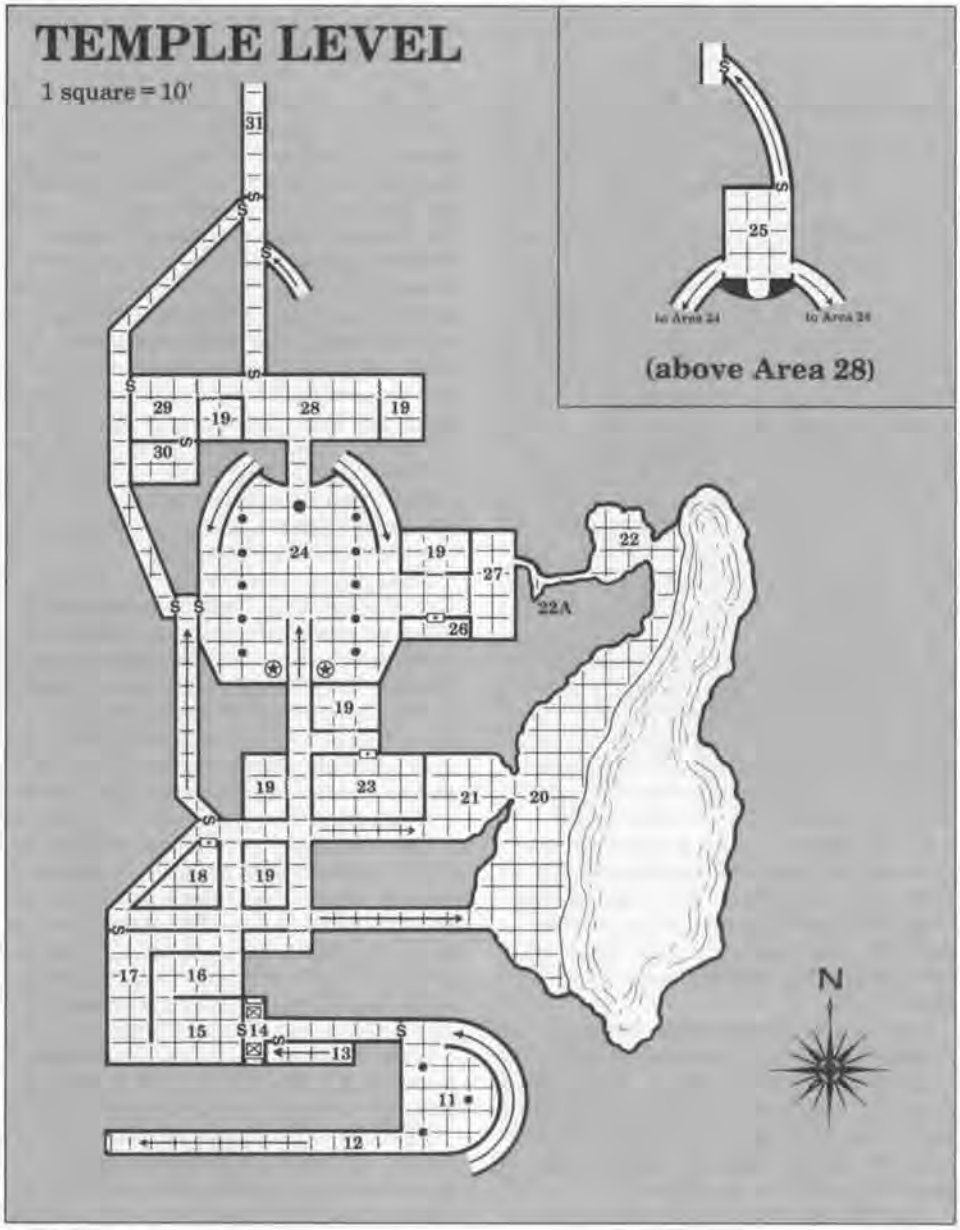
head and a 12′-long tail. It can constrict for 1-4 hp damage and can bite for 1-10 hp damage.

Sirrus, yuan-ti pureblood: AC −3; hp 42; XP 3,000; see area 16 for complete statistics. Sirrus wears *chain mail +2* and wields two short swords. He appears to be an attractive young man in his early 20s. His long black hair is always tied back in a braid. When he eats, he must swallow his meals whole, like a snake. His jaw can dislocate for large meals such as rabbits or birds.

Shan-Che, yuan-ti pureblood: AC 4; hp 43; XP 2,000; see area 16 for complete statistics. Shan-Che has a *ring of invisibility* and fights with two short swords. She appears to be an attractive Oriental woman in her late twenties, with long brown hair tied back. She takes great care not to show her forked tongue and small fangs.

The half-breed throws his shuriken at spell-casters before entering combat. Sirrus cannot cast *suggestion* or *polymorph other* while in his armor, so he will cast *sticks to snakes* on a nearby pile of sticks before entering combat. If there is time, he also casts *cause fear* and *darkness* on some of the more threatening PCs.

Shan-Che casts *sticks to snakes* on the nearby pile of sticks. After this, she casts *darkness* on a spell-caster (targeting the eyes), while she uses the corner of the wall for 50% cover. She then attempts to *polymorph* the most threatening PC into a rat. If she has time, she will cast a *cause fear* spell. Both the half-breed and Sirrus will protect Shan-Che if they must, so that she can cast her spells. If the fight goes badly, Shan-Che uses her *ring of invisibility* to flee to the greater temple (area 24), as will any other surviving ambushers.



18. Storage Room. This door is locked. The area is a storage room for fishing supplies, containing two 10′ × 20′ fishing nets. It also contains six empty barrels, 16 barrels full of bird feed, and six crates of torches.

19. Yuan-ti Quarters. Each of these rooms is the personal chamber of 1-2 yuan-ti (none are present). For privacy, a silk sheet hangs in each doorway. These curtains are decorated with tigers, Oriental dragons, ocean waves, swans, etc. Silks and other exotic fabrics soften the hard stone walls. The floors are covered with 3-10 beautifully decorated pillows and 2-5 blankets of Oriental make. The value of the fabrics and pillows from each room ranges from 500-2,000 gp.

20. Mineral Pool. This area is dimly lit by torches inset on the west wall. The warm mineral spring that bubbles up here is the heating source for this level. The water is drinkable and is the home of many small, pale, blind fish that the slaves catch for food when the yuan-ti allow. Small deposits of minerals line the slippery shoreline. This natural cavern is a bit taller than the rest of this level, reaching 25′ at its highest point. The bottom of the pool gradually slopes downward, reaching a maximum depth of about 20′ at its south end. The chirping of the birds in area 21 can clearly be heard throughout this cavern.

21. Food Storage. The walls of this chamber are lined with 120 cages, each filled with 1-4 small white wingless birds that the yuan-ti use for food. The chirping is very loud in this room. Each row of cages is bordered by a trough to make feeding the birds much easier. A

barrel of seed stands in the northwest corner.

22. Spirit Naga Lair. A strange, musty smell pervades this area. This muddy, puddle-filled room is the home of a spirit naga and six giant poisonous snakes.

Spirit naga: INT high; AL CE; AC 4; MV 12; HD 10; hp 71; THAC0 11; #AT 1; Dmg 1-3; SA poison, gaze *charms;* SZ H; ML 14; XP 7,000; MC2. Wizard spells: *color spray, magic missile* (×3), *alter self* (already cast), *Tasha's uncontrollable hideous laughter, Melf's minute meteors.* Priest spells: *cause light wounds, light, protection from good* (already cast), *hold person, heat metal.*

Giant poisonous snakes (6): INT animal; AL N; AC 5; MV 15; HD 4+2; hp 25 each; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1-3; SA poison (save vs. poison or die, otherwise take 3-18 hp damage); SZ M; ML 9; XP 420; MC1.

Before the party enters, the naga will have already cast her *protection from good* and *alter self* spells. She has changed her form to that of a beaten but beautiful woman chained to her lair's wall (the chains are real but not locked onto her wrists). She sits in a pool of water to hide her lower snake half. Her clothing is ripped and muddy, and her hair is wet and messy. She will not talk to the PCs but only look at them sadly. Each PC who meets her gaze must roll a saving throw vs. spells to avoid her *charm.*

After a few rounds of attempting to *charm* PCs, the naga will order her snakes, which were hiding in the puddles, and any *charmed* PCs to attack the party. She casts *Melf's minute meteors* (five per round), then *hold person* and any other spells as necessary.

The DM should play this spirit naga intelligently. If things go badly for her, she reverts to her true form and attempts to escape through the tiny tunnel in the southwest corner of the room.

22A. Spirit Naga's Treasure. This tunnel is only 2' in diameter (a halfling or gnome could crawl through here). The treasure, hidden in an alcove, consists of a sack containing 168 gp; another sack containing 11 gems worth 1,000 gp (×2), 500 gp (×3), 100 gp (×5), and 50 gp; a potion of *super-heroism;* a metal tube containing a scroll with the clerical spells *neutralize poison* (×2), *cure critical wounds,* and *raise dead;* a potion of *extra healing;* and a *wand of magic missiles* with 38 charges left.

23. Slave Chamber. The door is barred from the outside. This slave chamber doubles as a histachii breeding chamber once every 1,000 years. Luckily, the PCs have not entered the lair during the lifetime of any of these creatures. Histachii are humans that are transformed into horrid, malformed creatures through evil rituals performed by the yuan-ti every 1,000 years, when the stars and planets are in the correct astral conjunction (see the *Monstrous Compendium,* Kara-Tur appendix (MC6), "Yuan-ti"). The ritual is called the Night of the Venom, during which an evil brew called "black broth" is produced. A human who drinks this black broth is transformed into a histachii.

Histachii are needed for the production of purebloods and half-breeds because any yuan-ti mating produces only abominations. A histachii mating with another histachii produces a pureblood, while a histachii that mates with a yuan-ti produces a half-breed. A PC may know the above information if he makes a religion proficiency check at a −10 penalty.

There are only two figures in this dark, sand-covered chamber. One is a nomad who tried to escape and was caught and punished. The yuan-ti tortured him so that he can no longer walk or talk. He is now quite insane, but the other slaves smuggled food and water to him until they were taken away.

Nomad slave: AL N; AC 10; MV 0; 0-level human; hp 1; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type (unarmed); ML 3.

The other figure is a thin old man with a long white frizzled beard and hair that covers much of his face. He moves slowly but steadily and speaks in a soft, hoarse voice. This is actually a **yuan-ti pureblood** (hp 26; unarmed; same statistics as Dranthis in area 16) who will try to infiltrate the party.

The old man says his name is Rupert, and he does not know how long he has been down here. He mentions that the snakemen took all four of the other slaves away but did not take him for some reason. He casually mentions that he was a soldier serving the city of Scarboro (the PCs may or may not have heard of this place, but what he says is true. Of course, he had other motives). He asks that the PCs lend him a weapon so that he can help fight against the snakemen. If the PCs allow Rupert to accompany them, he will turn on the party at the first opportunity.

Rupert keeps his hair across his face because he has slit eyes, and this will give away his identity. If discovered, he attempts to flee.

Hidden under some straw is a thin metal stick, about a foot long, which can fit between the door and the doorway to lift off the iron bar from the inside. Rupert will use this tool to free himself if the PCs start a battle in the greater temple (area 24) without freeing him (he will be listening for it).

24. Greater Temple. This gigantic, dimly lit chamber is used for only the most important rituals and sacrifices, including the Night of the Venom. A ramp from the south corridor slopes down 10' to a floor of black marble streaked with red veins. Ten pillars rise from the floor to support the 40'-high ceiling. Each pillar is carved into the shapes of two differently colored snakes intertwined with each other. The snakes' colors include green, gray, purple, red, and black. Each serpent's head is pressed against the ceiling and has two sapphires inset in its eyes (value 100 gp, a total of 40).

Hanging in chains from each pillar are human corpses in various stages of decay. The southernmost two bodies are very fresh and both are terribly mutilated. These are two of the four slaves taken earlier from the slave quarters (area 23).

The ceiling depicts a night sky, showing the stars and planets in the correct astral conjunction needed to brew the black broth. A successful religion proficiency check allows a PC to realize that this scene has something to do with the timing of an unholy day.

Polished-gray lifelike statues of yuan-ti abominations stand to either side of the southern ramp. Both are in menacing poses, each with a katana and wakizashi in hand. These were once living abominations who unsuccessfully attempted to overthrow Yith'sehta, the group's leader. She petrified them and set them here for decoration and as examples for others who think of crossing her.

At the far north end of the room stands a gigantic 40'-high statue of the yuan-ti god Sch'theraqpasst, an ebony-winged cobra, mouth wide open as if posing for a strike. Two gigantic black

opals are inset in the idol's eyes (value 5,000 gp each). It seems to gaze downward at a 5′-diameter shallow pit located 20′ in front of the statue's base. A passageway leads north, at the base of the creature's abdomen. A ramp runs up each side of the curved wall and disappears behind the statue's outstretched wings (this is the entrance to area 25; see inset map).

The walls depict more horrid scenes of snakes and serpent men bringing carnage upon mankind in repulsive and unspeakable ways. The area is silent except for a steady metallic gonging coming from area 26.

25. Yith'sehta. This entire area radiates magic, the only evidence left of the countless sacrifices and gruesome rituals performed by the yuan-ti. The residual dweomer has no effect on magic cast within the temple area, but all within the area are protected as if wearing an *amulet of proof against detection and location.*

The two ramps from area 24 lead up behind the statue's head into this chamber. Here, Yith'sehta, the yuan-ti/greater medusa leader, watches the PCs through the mouth of the snake-god statue.

This strange hybrid was spawned ages ago when a greater medusa was allowed to reside within the yuan-ti lair as an ally (in other words, she was used to further yuan-ti aims). This medusa, being very ambitious, desired to rule over the yuan-ti side by side with the present yuan-ti abomination king, so she petrified the king's present queen. The king was impressed with how strong the medusa's ambitions were and immediately took her as his queen. These two produced Yith'sehta before the king was forced to destroy the greater medusa after she attempted to petrify him over a trivial matter.

Slowly, Yith'sehta grew in strength and power until she assassinated her father and gained leadership of the tribe, which she has now ruled for over 1,200 years.

Her plans are to attract the party toward the ophidians in area 27. If the party enters area 27 or begins to approach the statue or ramps, the ophidians from area 27 attack. Then the inhabitants of area 28 attack, emerging through the entrance located at the base of the statue, while the leader sends one of her abomination bodyguards down each ramp to attack. The leader stays in this area waiting for the party to approach her.

Yith'sehta, yuan-ti abomination/greater medusa: INT genius; AL CE; AC −3; MV 9; HD 12; hp 88; THAC0 9; #AT 2; Dmg 1-4 and by weapon type (+2 for strength); SA petrification, poison, spells; MR 20%; SZ L; ML 18; XP 14,000; MC1 (Yuan-ti, modified). Spells: *cause fear, darkness, snake charm, sticks to snakes, neutralize poison, suggestion.*

If Yith'sehta's gaze is met within 20′, the victim turns to stone unless a saving throw vs. petrification is made. If she hits with the snakes located on her head, a saving throw vs. poison must be made or the victim dies immediately. Yith'sehta uses a *naginata +3* (Dmg 1d8 +3) in combat, giving her a total of +5 to damage. She carries the snake fang amulet that was stolen by Sirrus. The amulet confers a +3 bonus to armor class and saving throws. Her appearance resembles that of a greater medusa, having a serpentine body and a mass of swarming snakes in the place of hair but she also has arms. She carries the keys to all locked rooms on this level.

Yuan-ti abomination bodyguards (2): hp 69, 60; SA constriction; see area 16 for complete statistics. These creatures are both fully snake. The larger one is gray and green striped, and the smaller is black, red, and yellow banded. If the bodyguards hit with constriction attacks, the victim automatically takes 2-8 hp damage each round thereafter.

Once the ambush begins, Yith'sehta views the battle from the mouth of the statue, using two bound and gagged slaves as 50% cover. If the PCs attempt to use missile fire or cast spells at her, she pushes the two slaves out of the mouth to fall 30′ below to their deaths.

Nomad slaves (2): AL NG; MV 6 (maimed); hp 3, 2; ML 5; see area 23 for complete statistics.

While out hunting for game, these two humans were attacked and captured by the yuan-ti over a year ago. If rescued, they will be extremely grateful and will help the PCs as long as needed. Because of previous torture, they cannot walk well and cannot speak.

If one or two PCs move up the ramps or fly toward Yith'sehta, she attempts to petrify them. She will cast spells if time

permits, and she will not hesitate to engage in combat. If things go badly, she will attempt to flee through the secret door in the northern wall and escape through the secret passage (area 31).

26. Armory. This door has a large locked padlock. There are a few good quality weapons neatly stored in here: two spears, a halberd, six naginatas, two long swords, three short swords, two sai, three chains, six shields, and an elaborate and colorful suit of samurai armor (value 450 gp).

27. Ophidian Lair. Loud metallic gonging is coming from this room; a snakeman is trying to attract the PCs' attention. When the PCs come within 10' of the silk curtain that hangs in the entrance, the rhythmic gonging abruptly stops. If the PCs enter the room or a fight begins in the greater temple (area 24), the ophidians rush to attack.

Ophidians (13): INT average; AL C(E); AC 5 (4 with shield); MV 9; HD 4; hp 30, 27 (×2), 26 (×3), 23 (×5), 18, 15; THAC0 17; #AT 2 (weapon plus bite); Dmg by weapon type/1-3; SA poison (save or turn into an ophidian); SZ M; ML 14; XP 270; MM2/97.

Ophidians appear to be short-tailed, thick-bodied snakes. Their humanlike arms protrude about 2' below the neck and end in four-fingered hands. Four of them carry naginatas (Dmg 1-8) and six shuriken (Dmg 1-4), which they attempt to throw before entering melee. The others carry shields and long swords.

The ophidians immediately rush the PCs. The four armed with naginatas attack from behind the other shieldmen, getting extra attacks on the PCs from behind the lines.

The spirit naga (area 22), if still alive, may be here also. She fights to the best of her ability, attempting to cast as many spells as possible before entering combat.

28. Ambushers. Two yuan-ti abominations and a half-breed wait here in darkness for the signal to attack. They send their two trained giant lizards into combat first. Any survivors from the ambush in areas 15, 16, and 17 are also present here. The half-breed sneaks off north through the secret passage to come around the back of the party to attack any spell-casters.

Yuan-ti abominations (2): hp 62, 57; see area 16 for complete statistics. Both abominations have human arms. The larger one is light green in color and wields a tetsubo (Dmg 1-10); the other is blue and red striped, wielding a two-handed long spear (Dmg 2-12).

Yuan-ti half-breed: AC 4; MV 12, fly 15; hp 41; Dmg 1-6/1-6; see area 16 for complete statistics. This half-breed is covered in brown scales and has snakes in place of arms. He can use these snakes to attack. He also has wings that allow him to fly.

Giant lizards (2): INT non; AL N; AC 5; MV 15; HD 3+1; hp 23, 20; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1-8; SA natural 20 indicates double damage taken every round thereafter; SZ H; ML 10; XP 270; MC1.

29. Yith'sehta's Quarters. A beautiful silk sheet, decorated with Oriental dragons (value 300 gp), hangs in the doorway. The southwest corner of the room is covered with seven plush silk pillows (value 100 gp each) and four silk blankets (value 150 gp each). The south, east, and west walls are covered in beautifully decorated silk sheets depicting more designs of colorful dragons. On the north wall, a bas-relief carving of Sch'theraqpasst is engraved in black marble. Two black opals are inset in the eyes (value 1,000 gp each).

30. Treasure Room. Inside this unlit room are two chests and a large trunk. The keys to these are hidden above the secret door in the northwest corner.

The first chest has contact poison on the lock (type M; save vs. poison or take 20 hp damage, otherwise suffer 5 hp damage). The lock itself also contains a poison needle trap (save vs. poison or die immediately).

The chest is filled with 658 gp and 374 sp. On the top of the heap of coins lies a platinum chalice decorated with three enameled tigers that have deep-blue spinels inset for eyes (value 4,000 gp). Spilling out of the chalice are 14 pale blue-green aquamarines worth 200 gp each. Next to the chalice lies a highly ornate silver jewelry box with a beautiful swan engraved into the lid (value 650 gp). It contains a gold ring with an amber gem set into it (value 150 gp), a ring embellished with a detailed carving of a golden lion with small, dark-green alexandrites inset into its eyes (value 500 gp for exceptional workmanship), and a pearl necklace inset with pieces of crimson coral (value 750 gp).

The second chest is unlocked but trapped with two poisoned scythe blades that spring out when the chest is opened, inflicting 3-18 hp damage to anyone in front or in back of the chest. Each scythe has a THAC0 of 5 and is covered with type D poison (save vs. poison or take 30 hp damage, otherwise suffer 2-12 hp damage).

The chest is filled with 784 pp and 418 gp. It has a false bottom containing a small metal box. In the box is a gold necklace with a small star of gold hanging from it. This is a *necklace of strangulation*, a last revenge trap set by the yuan-ti.

The trunk in the middle of the room is locked and trapped. If it is opened, three poisoned darts shoot out from each of the four sides. The darts have a THAC0 of 10 and inflict 1-2 hp damage per hit. The poison is type D (see above).

The trunk contains a halfling-sized suit of *leather armor +2*, a metal tube containing a clerical scroll of *cure critical wounds* and *regenerate*, and a modified *ring of truth* that confers the ability to *know alignment* once per day. It functions only for those of good alignment.

31. Secret Escape Passage. This secret passage winds for 1,500' and eventually leads out into the desert.

Concluding the Adventure

If the PCs surrender or are captured, they will probably wish that they had died. The yuan-ti are not going to take the PCs' intrusion lightly and will make sure the PCs die a long and painful death. If any PC is *polymorphed*, the yuan-ti will attempt to capture and cage him as a pet for life (though the DM may opt to have Captain Reinhart send another adventuring party to investigate what has happened to the PCs).

If the PCs defeat or rout the yuan-ti and return to Balthasar, they may have made powerful permanent enemies if any of the yuan-ti survived. Further adventures involving yuan-ti plots are left to the DM's discretion. Ω

We're Fighting For Your Life.
American Heart Association

A WIZARD'S FATE

BY CHRISTOPHER PERKINS

If love overcomes evil, remember to get rid of the imp!

Artwork by Bob Walters

Christopher relates that the idea for this adventure came while he was browsing through a book of proverbs (no doubt akin to the dreaded vacuous grimoire). When he stumbled on the old adage "familiarity breeds contempt," a vision of an imp eating his master's spell book came to mind. The imp Zotzpox emerged soon thereafter.

"A Wizard's Fate" is an AD&D® adventure designed for 3-6 player characters of levels 1-3 (about eight levels total). The alignment of the party should be predominantly good, and a variety of races and classes is suggested. While this module can be used to introduce new players to the AD&D game, it presents an excellent challenge for experienced players as well. The adventure is set in the FORGOTTEN REALMS® fantasy setting but fits easily into any campaign world.

Several monsters encountered in this adventure are detailed in MC14, the FIEND FOLIO® appendix to the *Monstrous Compendium.* DMs without this accessory may use the descriptions in the AD&D 1st Edition FIEND FOLIO tome.

Adventure Background

The story begins with Elzid Natholin, a notorious wizard and alchemist. In his youth, Elzid used his influence and alchemical prowess to plunge the countryside into mayhem. He robbed merchants blind by seducing their innocent daughters with love potions, he crushed noble families by turning them against one another with potions of *delusion* and *elixirs of madness,* and he sold deadly poison to anyone willing to pursue an evil scheme. His name was synonymous with corruption and deceit.

Yet, once he had earned a suitably nefarious reputation, Elzid was content to return to his magical studies. He built himself a hideous stone tower atop a small hill. The tower, with its black walls and frowning gargoyles, became an eyesore on the horizon.

Elzid's evil escapades attracted not only the attention of the civilized communities around him, but the attention of the Lower Planes as well. For contributions made to the cause of evil, the diabolical masters of the Nine Hells awarded Elzid an imp familiar. Elzid had hoped for something more grand, such as an army of lesser baatezu or a

pit fiend manservant, but he was not about to reject this gesture of gratitude. Little did he know that his familiar would lead to his undoing.

As the years passed, Elzid became less of a threat to civilization. Discounting the occasional affair, he became bored with people in general. He spent the long hours of each day researching and performing alchemical experiments. Sometimes he would venture into a nearby town, careful to conceal his identity while searching for alchemical compounds and spell components. However, the days of evil deeds gradually died as his wicked ambitions dissipated.

Zotzpox, Elzid's imp familiar, became increasingly concerned about its master's waning evil. Elzid had not performed one inherently evil act in several months, and this had the forces of the Nine Hells justifiably frustrated. The imp tried several diabolical strategies to rejuvenate the hatred and malevolence that once fueled Elzid's soul (slipping a tome titled *The Making of a Good Tyrant* under its master's pillow, for instance), but nothing seemed to work.

One night, Elzid went to town bearing a bundle of flowers that he had handpicked from the fields around his tower. Zotzpox, puzzled by this behavior, secretly followed the wizard to his nocturnal rendezvous. Panic seized the imp when it finally learned that Elzid had a deep affection for a young maiden named Erilyn Windfellow.

Elzid was a man transformed by true love. He promised Erilyn that he would cast aside his evil ways to spend the rest of his life in her company. Neither the imp nor the forces of the Nine Hells could believe, let alone tolerate, such betrayal. Elzid sensed the imp's dissatisfaction and made preparations to banish the creature back to its home on the Lower Planes, but thoughts of Erilyn preoccupied him and, in the end, Zotzpox beat him to the punch.

As a wedding present, Elzid promised to make Erilyn a bottle of the finest perfume. With that happy thought in mind, the love-struck mage went to work in his laboratory, searching for the most pleasing scent. Little did he realize, however, that Zotzpox had tampered with the various compounds. Elzid mixed what he figured were two essential ingredients of L'Eau de Magnifique and obliterated both himself and his tower.

The blast resounded like thunder for miles, and bits of Elzid and his tower flew in every direction. Zotzpox escaped the explosion by hiding in the dungeon beneath the tower, although even the dungeon could not escape partial collapse. Free of its master and serving the greater forces of evil, Zotzpox now guards Elzid's treasury (located in the dungeon). The masters of the Nine Hells have instructed Zotzpox to protect the vault from would-be treasure hunters until an evil horde arrives to seize the dead mage's trove. Zotzpox's success in this endeavor will likely result in a promotion to a higher form of diabolical existence (a spinagon baatezu, for instance). At least, that is what Zotzpox hopes. Of course, the masters of the Nine Hells have promised absolutely nothing.

For the DUNGEON MASTER™

Elzid's tower (or rather, what's left of it) is located in the wilderness between the small town of Secomber and the High Forest. For information on these areas, the DM should consult FR5 *The Savage Frontier.* The PCs begin in Secomber, having just been summoned to the residence of Loren Kenither, a sage interested in determining the truth of Elzid's fate.

Elzid's activities prior to his unprecedented annihilation did not go unnoticed in Secomber. Several individuals were aware of the budding romance between him and Erilyn Windfellow. Most of these people assumed, however, that it was simply another one of the wizard's adventurous seductions. People did not impose for fear of attracting the dark mage's wrath.

However, in the wake of Elzid's apparent death came Erilyn's strange disappearance. Rumor is that she left for the tower the moment she heard of its destruction. Many residents of Secomber heard the blast, but few actually saw the tower explode. Several curious individuals left to investigate the ruins shortly afterward, but they have yet to return.

The party's main objective in this adventure will be to determine the cause of Elzid's demise. Their opponent is Zotzpox the imp. To prepare for the inevitable confrontation, the DM should carefully read the "Imp" entry in the *Monstrous Compendium.* The imp's spell-like powers, magic resistance, poison, and invulnerability to nonmagical and nonsilver weapons make it a formidable enemy for a party of 1st-level PCs. Killing or driving away the familiar should not be an easy task. If the imp is played correctly, the party should find it downright aggravating and lethal.

As the adventurers explore the cause of Elzid's death, they will have the opportunity to save Erilyn Windfellow from Zotzpox's clutches and recover some of Elzid's hoarded loot, now sealed in the dungeon treasury. Solve the mystery, save the maiden, snatch the treasure—what more could a low-level party desire?

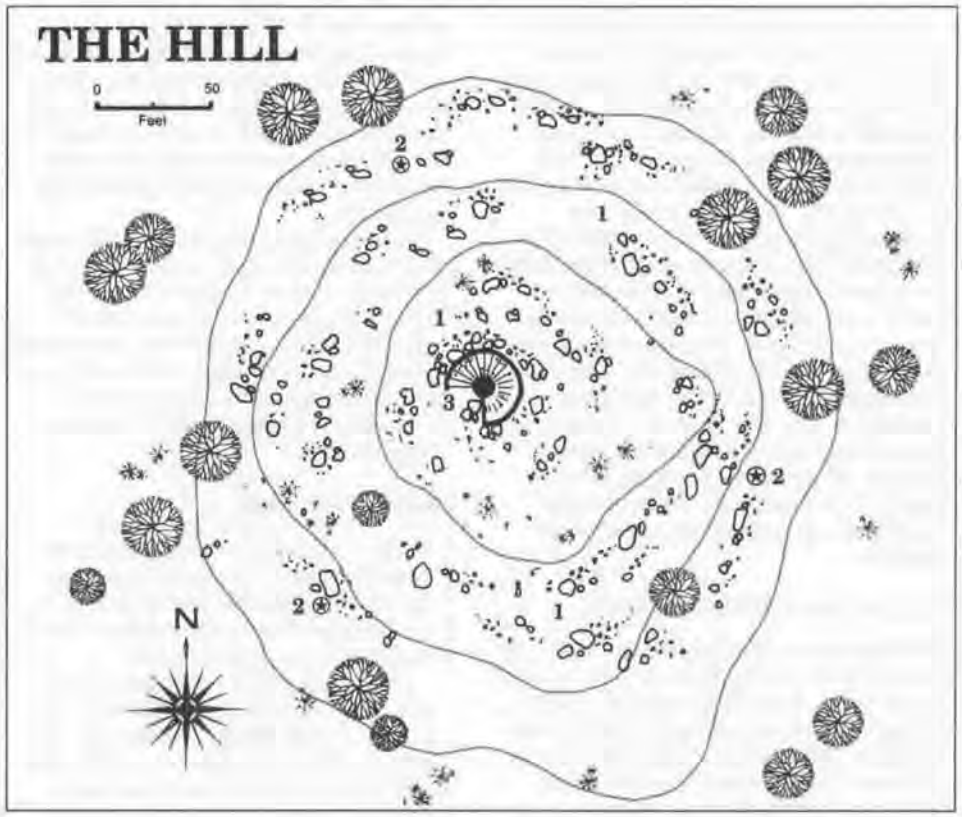
Meeting the Sage

Under the mellow morning sun, you approach the residence of the sage Loren Kenither. He has beckoned you to his home at the crack of dawn to present you with a quest.

"My friends," he says, gesturing you to enter and be comfortable. "As a sage, I find myself responsible for solving the puzzles of the world. Yet one puzzle intrigues me now more than any other. Perhaps you have already heard the rumors spreading throughout the community concerning the death of the evil wizard Elzid Natholin. Several mornings ago, Elzid's tower exploded, rattling the countryside awake with thunder. The tower—whatever remains of it, that is—lies one day's journey north. I want you to investigate the ruins on my behalf and determine the cause of the explosion.

"Elzid was handsome and charismatic, and he used his alchemical skills to seduce wealthy young women with love potions. He also concocted and dispersed potions that caused madness, sickness, and death. We should count our blessings that he is gone. Who cares whether it was his alchemy or his conjurations that destroyed him? But did Elzid fall victim to his own magic and knowledge, or did something else send him to his grave? This is the question that must be answered.

"Curiosity," he says dryly, "is the foundation of knowledge. I am too old to be an explorer, so I require you to solve the mystery for me. Events of this nature tend to frighten people.



They begin concocting bad omens and signs. Some people are already convinced that Elzid has released a savage demon on the countryside. These rumors are compounded by one dark fact: Several individuals have already ventured to the ruins, and none have returned.

"Among those gone is a maiden named Erilyn Windfellow. It is believed that Elzid brought her flowers the night before he died. The wizard has seduced many a merchant's lonely daughter for profit, but the Windfellow family is poor and had little to offer him. The entire affair is very puzzling.

"Solve the riddle of Elzid's demise for me, and I will see that you are paid justly. If the gods choose to reward you further, you may even find some treasure amidst the ruins."

Loren may be a scholar, but he provides unreliable and empty information. Most of his opinions are based solely on theory, but he tries to make this point clear at the outset. He believes, as most people do, that Elzid was selfish and deceitful. In truth, Elzid's lawful-evil alignment was changed by months of thoughtful isolation and the tender, loving care of a young woman. Loren has not even considered the involvement of a familiar.

Loren Kenither, human sage: AL LN; AC 10; MV 9; W4; hp 9; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg by spell or weapon type; S 10, D 12, C 12, I 17, W 14, Ch 13; ML 10.

Loren wears a plain brown robe and a belt lined with pouches (containing his spell components and 22 gp). He has a sack of 250 gp hidden in his house, and he will offer 150 gp as the reward for finding clues to Elzid's demise. He usually has the following spells memorized: *detect magic, read magic, unseen servant, ESP,* and *know alignment.* His spell book, which he keeps carefully hidden, contains the following additional spells: *change self, comprehend languages, identify, shield; detect invisibility, locate object, magic mouth,* and *wizard lock.* PCs requesting Loren's spell-casting services must pay 10 gp per spell level (standard sage fee).

Tower Ruins

The ruins of Elzid's tower lie 15 miles north of Secomber on a hill surrounded by dense brush and copses of elm, hickory, and juniper trees. The hill itself has an unobstructed view of the High Forest to the north. Adventurers traveling to the hill will have few, if any, random encounters. There are plenty of birds, rodents, and grazing animals to hunt, but few hostile creatures (perhaps a small band of orcs searching for the tower, a sleeping ogre, and a poisonous snake or two would suffice).

When the ruins on the hill first come into view, read or paraphrase the following to the players:

> You approach a hill of grass and wildflowers surrounded by footpaths and copses of trees. Scattered on the hill are the stony remnants of Elzid's tower. The rings of debris clearly indicate the magnitude of the explosion that destroyed the structure. Tight clusters of blasted rock mark the area where the tower once stood on the hill's peak.

When the PCs arrive here, Zotzpox is watching them closely in *polymorphed* form. The imp has disguised itself as a raven and has perched on a boulder or nearby tree, mingling uncomfortably with several other blackbirds and crows.

Zotzpox, imp familiar: INT average; AL LE; AC 2; MV 6, fly 18 (A); HD 2+2; hp 15; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1-4; SA poison stinger (save vs. poison or die instantly); SD spell-like abilities; immune to cold, fire, and electricity; resists all other spell attacks as 7-HD monster; harmed by only magical and silver weapons; regenerates 1 hp per melee round; MR 25%; SZ T (2' tall); ML 10; XP 650; MC1.

Zotzpox can *polymorph* itself, at will, into the forms of a raven and a large spider, although it can inflict damage in the latter form only. Zotzpox can also *detect good, detect magic,* and become *invisible* at will. Once per day, the imp can cast a *suggestion* spell. Zotzpox also wears Elzid's old *ring of spell storing,* a present from the wizard to the imp as a gift of fealty. The ring has the following spells stored: *darkness 15' radius, forget, hypnotism, improved phantasmal force,* and *levitate* (all cast at the 7th level of spell use).

Zotzpox cannot physically harm any creature protected by a *protection from evil* spell (see the AD&D 2nd Edition *Player's Handbook*, page 137).

Zotzpox will use its *detect magic* ability to determine if the party is carrying magical weapons. If it can secretly approach an adventurer wielding a magical weapon, the imp uses its *suggestion* power to make the PC throw the weapon away. Zotzpox can use this power while *invisible*. The imp then recovers the discarded weapon as quickly as possible, hiding it someplace where it will not be easily found.

Zotzpox's task is to prevent intruders from entering the tower's dungeon complex, but it exercises restraint in the presence of multiple intruders. The imp tries to kill only the most dangerous adversaries. Zotzpox's only weapon is its poisoned stinger, and it does not want to risk missing its target or being wounded, so it typically waits for the most advantageous moment to attack. The imp avoids direct confrontations so long as it thinks the dungeon's treasures are secure.

If the PCs enter the dungeon, Zotzpox stays as close to them as possible by becoming *invisible* or assuming large spider form. As a spider, the imp can walk silently across dark ceilings, staying out of attack range and out of sight. If the party splits up, the imp will have an easier time picking the adventurers off one by one.

If its presence becomes known, Zotzpox will not hesitate to use its magical ring. The imp has infravision and can attack the party freely even after casting the *darkness 15' radius* spell. It can also use the *forget* spell to befuddle wizards and priests trying to cast spells of their own. The imp has more tricks at its disposal, but it reserves these for special encounters in the tower dungeon. The key to playing Zotzpox is to make the imp as evasive and cunning as possible.

The Hill

Rings of broken stone cover the hill's surface. The hill itself is quite smooth and featureless, save for the rash of dandelions and wild flower patches. The tower rubble gives no indication of the structure's former size and appearance. PCs carefully searching the debris have a 20% chance of finding something interesting (check each turn). The DM may consult the "Random Discovery Table" to determine what has been found.

1. Human Corpse.

> Face down in the grass, a human corpse lies here, surrounded by the tower's debris. The corpse is wearing clothes but appears to have no weapons or equipment of any kind.

There are three human corpses on the hill (the locations of these bodies are indicated on the map). These dead humans—two males and a female—came from Secomber to explore the ruins and were slain by Zotzpox. All three individuals died from a poisonous sting to the neck. Zotzpox confiscated anything of value from the corpses and discarded whatever weapons they were carrying. Erilyn Windfellow is not among the deceased, although the female corpse may lead the party to believe otherwise.

2. Gargoyle Statues.

> Amidst the wreckage lies a damaged gargoyle statue, evidently a grim fixture of the tower that once was.

These statues once perched on the high battlements of Elzid's tower. Now they lie in ruin amidst the tower debris. A family of giant centipedes lives under the southernmost statue. The centipedes will attack if the statue is disturbed.

Giant centipedes (1d6 + 2): INT non; AL N; AC 9; MV 15; HD ¼; hp 2 each; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg nil; SA paralytic poison (+4 to saving throws); SZ T; ML 6; XP 35 each; MC1.

Zotzpox will attempt to sting anyone rendered immobile by the centipedes' poison.

3. Descending Stairs.

> A spiral staircase strewn with rocks and debris descends into the dark earth. The staircase is 10' wide.

The staircase spirals 60' into the ground. The adventurers must rely on infravision or artificial lighting once they are 15' below ground.

The Dungeon

None of the chambers or corridors in the tower dungeon are illuminated. Room ceilings are 15' high; hallways are 10' high. Doors are made of wood, the exceptions being the doors in area 13 and all secret doors, which are made of stone. There are no wandering monsters in the dungeon.

4. Hall of Mosaics.

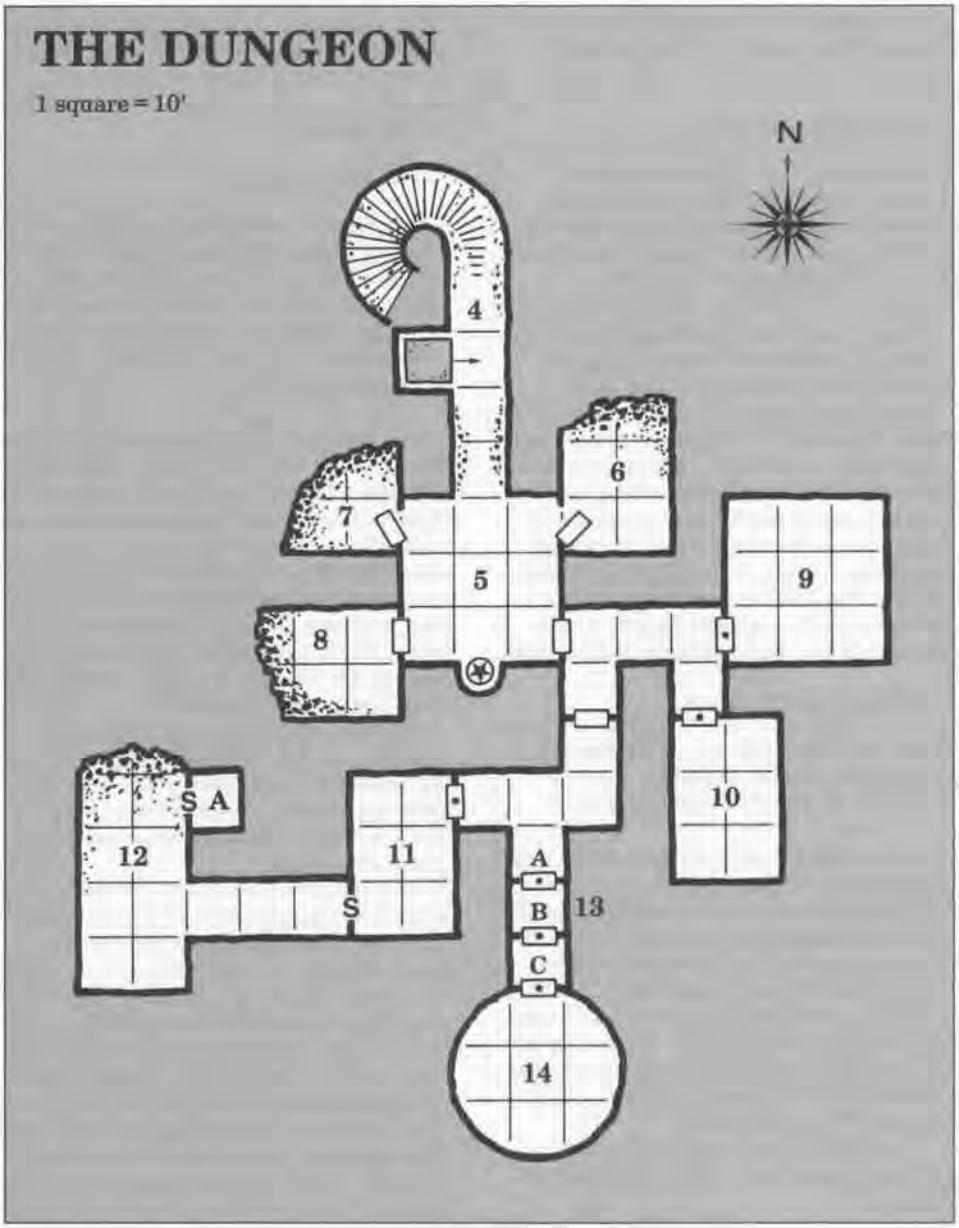
> A corridor of cold stone lies before you. The corridor opens into a wider unlit area 40' away, and its walls are painted with mosaics of peculiar runes and designs. Pebbles and dust, loosened by the tower's explosion, have fallen from the ceiling to the floor.

The painted mosaics help to conceal a movable 10' × 10' × 10' stone block set into the western wall. The section of floor in front of the block is the pressure plate that activates this trap. A thief searching the walls and floor for traps will spot the hairline cracks of the block and pressure plate if a successful find-traps roll is made. The trap can be disarmed, but there is a −30% penalty to the thief's remove-traps roll.

PCs with the jumping nonweapon proficiency may be able to leap over the 10' wide pressure plate, while thieves making successful climb-walls rolls (with a −40% penalty) can avoid the plate altogether.

Any weight in excess of 150 lbs. placed on the pressure plate activates the trap. The stone block moves outward with a noisy grinding sound, effectively sealing off the corridor. The block requires 10 seconds to completely seal the corridor, affording plenty of time to get out of the way. A *hold portal* spell will prevent the block from closing for the duration of the spell, provided the block has not yet sealed off the entire corridor. Once the block has moved into place, it cannot be forced back into its niche for 12 hours (during which time the mechanisms that pushed the block out remain in place). A *knock* spell will unlock these mechanisms and return the block to its niche.

If the trap is activated, Zotzpox can bypass it by assuming the form of a smaller-than-average large spider and squeezing through the few inches of space afforded between the block and the ceiling. PCs who are capable of reducing their size can bypass the trap similarly. The goblins in areas 5, 6, and 8 crossed the pressure plate one at a time and were not heavy enough to trigger the trap.



5. Antechamber.

A thick layer of dust has settled in this 30'-square chamber. Lying in the middle of the floor are two dead goblins, their crude spears still clutched in their hands. At the far end of the chamber, a statue of a horned bipedal creature stands in a shallow alcove.

The statue points toward you with one cruel finger, and its stony visage bears a menacing grin. The chamber has four doors, two of which hang open on their hinges.

If the party makes it this far and Zotzpox is still alive, the imp may use its *ring of spell storing* to cast an *improved phantasmal force* spell. An evil laugh begins to fill the room, equivalent in volume to eight screaming men and sufficient to cause pebbles and dust to fall from the ceiling. Then, an illusory **hamatula baatezu** (similar in appearance to the statue) appears in a sudden burst of flame. The imp tries to sting party members distracted by the illusion. The illusory baatezu inflicts illusory damage (two claw attacks for 2d4 hp damage each). It has a THAC0 of 13 and appears to be harmed by only magical weapons (although it cannot be slain, consider it AC 1 for attack purposes).

Anyone "killed" by the illusory baatezu is rendered unconscious and must roll for system shock. Unconscious PCs cannot defend against Zotzpox's attack. If these adventurers are not killed by the imp's poison stinger or system-shock failure, they regain consciousness in 1-3 turns. For more details on illusions, the DM should consult the *PH*, pages 82-84. (For DMs who do not have the Outer Planes appendix to the *Monstrous Compendium*, the hamatula baatezu is virtually identical to the AD&D 1st Edition game's barbed devil.)

The two goblins lying in the center of the room (and their friends in area 6) decided to investigate the ruins after hearing the thunderous explosion of Elzid's tower from their distant lair. They fell victim to Zotzpox's poison stinger and quickly perished. Neither of their spears is magical, and Zotzpox has already robbed them of their measly treasures.

The statue is 7' tall. PCs looking closely at the statue have a base 15% chance of noticing a hairline crack that extends around its neck (thieves can add their find-traps percentages to this base chance).

The statue's head can be unscrewed from its neck, revealing a hollow compartment in the neck itself. The compartment holds a large iron key and a wooden scroll tube. The iron key is one of three keys needed to enter Elzid's treasury (see area 13 for details). The wooden tube contains a wizard's scroll with the spells *protection from evil* and *spider climb* (both cast at 4th level). Remember that Zotzpox cannot physically harm any creature protected by a *protection from evil* spell.

6. Buried Treasure.

The far end of this unlit room seems to have collapsed, leaving little more than a pile of rubble. However, the corpses of two goblins lie sprawled on the debris, spears jutting out of their backs.

These two goblins were killed while searching the rubble. Zotzpox stung the poor creatures to death, then stabbed their lifeless bodies with their own spears. He did not, however, see what the goblins were unearthing. Anyone

who searches the rubble will find a *dagger +1, +2 vs. tiny or small creatures* with a 100-gp amethyst set into its pommel. Prying the amethyst from the pommel permanently renders the dagger nonmagical. At the DM's discretion, adventurers searching the rubble may also find one other item of interest (use the "Random Discovery Table").

7. Collapsed Chamber.

> Most of this room has collapsed. Loose earth filters in through the ceiling, and nothing but heaps of rock and rubble remain.

PCs searching the rubble have a 25% chance per turn of discovering something of interest. The DM should use the "Random Discovery Table" to determine what the PCs find. No more than three items of interest can be found here.

8. Rats and Bones. Anyone opening this door more than 6" will trigger a trap. Zotzpox has strung a net full of nonmagical helmets and pieces of mail armor above the door to drop on the first person entering the chamber (inflicting 2d4 hp damage). The trap may be disarmed by a thief normally.

> Lying on the floor of this collapsed chamber is a dead goblin. Several rats are gnawing at the corpse, while a few others frantically scour the debris-strewn corners for edibles. Partially devoured rats and old rat bones litter the floor.

This unfortunate goblin was slain by Zotzpox; PCs checking the corpse will see a sting wound on its left arm. The goblin still clutches a dagger in its left hand. The half-eaten rats are the remnants of Zotzpox's last dinner, and the live rats are harmless.

Buried in the rubble is a torn sack containing Zotzpox's private hoard of collectibles: 19 gp, 25 sp, 32 cp, a tinderbox, three silver bracelets (10 gp apiece), a gold brooch set with semiprecious stones (125 gp), a gold drinking goblet (25 gp), a sling, four sling bullets, a sheathed short sword, three daggers, and a battered helmet. In the helmet are five pieces of cheap jewelry (3 gp each), two gold rings (5 gp each), three lumps of quartz (10 gp each), an ebony stick (8 gp) with a *Nystul's magic aura* spell cast on it, and the keys to areas 9 and 10.

9. Summoning Room. The door to this chamber is locked. Thieves have normal chances to pick the lock. The key for the lock is hidden in area 8.

> This 30'-square chamber appears to have been undamaged by the blast that destroyed the tower. A circle surrounded by magical runes has been painted in the middle of the floor. A wooden lectern stands close by. Resting on the lectern is a sheet of parchment yellow and curled with age. Two evil-looking statuettes sit at the base of the lectern.

The statuettes are not enchanted. Each stands 2' high and weighs 50 lbs. The lectern is ornately carved but nonmagical in nature. The parchment is actually a scroll, but only someone with the ancient languages proficiency or a *comprehend languages* spell can read it (thieves can use their read-languages ability). The scroll reads:

> With tongue of flame, I send thee on
> Thy journey into fire;
> To infernal planes, I say "Begone!"
> Lest thou arouse my ire.

Elzid had planned to do away with Zotzpox by forcibly returning the imp to the Nine Hells. Only by speaking the above words aloud can the power of the scroll be invoked, and then nothing occurs unless Zotzpox has been lured into the magic circle (a challenging feat).

The PCs can hold the imp in the magic circle by reciting the verse aloud. When the verse is complete, Zotzpox must check against its magic resistance

Random Discovery Table

(Roll 1d20; Each item can be found only once.)

1. A scrap of paper with the words "ELZID I HATE" scrawled on it. The E's in the words are written backward.
2. An intact jar of rose petals (spell component for *sleep* spells).
3. A stoppered metal tube containing a scroll with the wizard spell *find familiar* written on it.
4. A stuffed but badly charred owl, inside of which is hidden a gemstone worth 10-100 gp.
5. A book cover embossed with runes that can be read as *Elzid's Ultimate Spell Book*. All the pages of the book have been burned to ashes.
6. A burned scrap of paper with the following poem written on it:

   Do I love you? Yes, I do.
   I'd shed my evil ways for you.
   I'd turn my heart from black to true.
   My heart, I've given unto you.

7. An ornamental dagger with three agates set into the pommel (worth 10 gp each). The dagger has a 10% chance of breaking with each hit.
8. A 5"-tall baatezu statuette made of ebony (worth 15 gp).
9. A singed tapestry with gold embroidery (worth 10 gp) depicting two warriors hacking each other to pieces.
10. An undamaged bottle of fine Sembian wine (worth 25 gp).
11. A gold ring (worth 4 gp) with keys to all of the chambers in Elzid's former tower. The keys do not unlock any doors in the tower dungeon.
12. A tattered robe of fine fabric with a nonmagical deck of cards tucked into one pocket.
13. A dented and blackened copper cauldron (worth 8 gp).
14. A brass milk dish with the name "Zotzpox" painted on it in large black letters.
15. A framed but badly burned portrait of a darkly handsome man (Elzid Natholin) wearing a black cloak.
16. An orc's skull.
17. A scorched book titled *The Making of a Good Tyrant* with a letter addressed to the wizard Eli Luzfador stuffed inside it. The letter reads as follows:

   "I cannot believe that the infernal dukes would reward me so unfairly, especially after all of my evil deeds. I ask for a legion of baatezu, and instead I get one measly . . . (letter burned here) . . . . Would you be so kind as to return the book you borrowed from me last winter. There are some particularly nasty spells inside, as you well know, that may be useful."

   The rest of the letter is burned.
18. A jade gaming piece elegantly carved into the shape of a queen (worth 5 gp).
19. A cracked and useless *crystal ball*.
20. An intact potion of *fire resistance* with one draught.

or be banished to its home plane. If the creature resists the magic, it still sustains 2d6 hp damage from the agony of the experience. If it survives, it can no longer be confined in the circle or banished using the scroll. The scroll can be used only once before turning to dust.

The PCs may also use the magic circle for *protection from evil* spells. The circle is 7′ in diameter and can protect as many as four people.

10. Old Bugbear Bones. The door to this room is locked, but the key can be found in area 8. The lock is poorly crafted, and a thief's attempt to open the lock receives a +10% bonus to the roll.

> A dirt-stained rug covers the floor of this unlit 20′ × 30′ chamber. At the far end of the room is a splintered desk. A beautiful woman dressed in white sits behind the desk, her expression pale and emotionless as she stares at you unblinking. Near her stand a pair of huge skeletons, each 7′ tall and wielding a fearsome battle axe.

The woman in the chair is Erilyn Windfellow. She came to the ruins several days ago hoping to find Elzid alive but instead encountered Zotzpox. The imp recognized her and thought she would make a nice gift for its masters in the Nine Hells. Using a *hypnotism* spell cast from the *ring of spell storing*, Zotzpox placed Erilyn in a trancelike state that persists until she is touched. The skeletons are the remains of two bugbears animated by Elzid as servants. Zotzpox is able to command these monsters and has ordered them to guard Erilyn from all intruders.

Erilyn Windfellow: AL LG; AC 10; MV 12; 0-level human; hp 4; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type (unarmed); ML 6; XP 420 (for her rescue only).

Erilyn is a raven-haired woman scarcely more than 20 years old. If rescued, she sadly confesses to her romance with the wizard Elzid. She has only kind things to say about him and claims that he was prepared to end his evil ways to secure their love. She wears a gilded golden bracelet set with emerald chips (1,000 gp) given to her by Elzid. Elzid had promised to prepare a bottle of the finest perfume for her, but he obviously did not have the chance. The Windfellow family will pay up to 75 gp (their entire savings) for Erilyn's safe return.

Bugbear skeletons (2): INT non; AL N; AC 6; MV 12; HD 3; hp 18 each; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1-10 (large battle axe); SD edged and piercing weapons inflict half damage; impervious to cold-based attacks; MR immune to *hold, charm, fear,* and *sleep* spells; SZ L (7′ tall); ML special; XP 650; MC1 (Skeleton, monster, variant). Despite their size, the bugbear skeletons are turned as normal skeletons.

One of the skeletons has a large wooden key inside its ribcage. This key is one of three keys needed to enter Elzid's treasury (see area 13). The desk contains a single piece of paper with the word "kizzimic" written on it (this is the key word for disarming the *fire trap* in area 12).

11. Dungeon Library. The door to this chamber is locked and trapped with a *magic mouth* spell. Anyone touching the door triggers the mouth to say, "Begone, or by Zotzpox's name you shall be cursed!" The mouth can be activated only once. The lock can be picked normally.

> This unlit 20′ × 30′ chamber has been destroyed by fire. The charred remains of tables and shelves litter the room, and burned books lie scattered on the floor. Ruthlessly etched into one wall are the words "ELZID WAS AN EVIL MAN" with the E's scrawled backward.

Elzid had many libraries, and this was one of them. When Elzid's abandoned his evil ways, he set fire to this library and destroyed most of the evil tomes contained within. Some books were only singed in the blaze, but none of the remaining volumes are magical.

The etchings were made by Zotzpox in angry response to his master's behavior, but Zotzpox never learned to write properly. Near the etchings, a secret door leads to area 12.

12. Chamber of Webs.

> One end of this dusty, unlit room has collapsed in response to the explosion of Elzid's tower, and heaps of fallen rocks and debris have piled up on the floor. Webs fill the room and conceal the ceiling.

Four large spiders occupy this chamber, although they are difficult to see when hidden among their webs. PCs without illumination will not see the webs until they walk into one, at which time it may be too late.

Large spiders (4): INT non; AL N; AC 8; MV 6, web 15; HD 1+1; hp 8, 6 (×2), 5; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1; SA poison (Type A, saving throws at +2); SZ S; ML 7; XP 175; MC1.

These spiders have lived in the dungeon for years. Elzid once asked Zotzpox to get rid of them, but the imp never bothered.

The spiders' webs do not burn very well, although fire will certainly singe them. Trapped in the webs near the ceiling are several dead rats and a potion of *healing* (three doses). Attempting to burn the webs may cause the potion bottle to fall and shatter on the floor.

A secret door is set into the eastern wall, but it cannot be opened until the rubble around it is cleared away (requiring three full rounds). Beyond the secret door is a 10′ × 10′ closet (marked **A** on the map) that holds a locked wooden chest. Touching the chest triggers a *fire trap* spell that inflicts 1d4+7 hp damage to anyone within a 5′ radius (save vs. spells for half damage). A *knock* spell will trigger the trap, enabling the PCs to remain a safe distance away. Thieves have half their normal chances of detecting and removing the trap (failure to remove the trap causes it to detonate). The trap can also be bypassed by saying the key word, "kizzimic," which is found on a scrap of paper in area 10.

The wooden chest contains a silver spearhead wrapped in velvet, an unsheathed *broad sword +1,* a scroll with the wizard spells *hold portal* and *scare,* a large brass key, and a *wand of shocking* (with six charges). The key is one of three keys needed to enter Elzid's treasury (see area 13 for details). The *wand of shocking* delivers 2d4+2 hp electrical damage by touch (an attack roll is required). The command word for the wand—"sizzle"—is etched into its length. (Remember, though, that Zotzpox is immune to electrical attacks of any kind.)

13. Three Stone Doors. Each of these three stone doors (13A-13C) is a different shape. Enchantments placed on the doors protect them from physical damage and *knock* spells. Thieves cannot pick open the portals. The only way of unlocking them is to use the proper

keys (see below).

Zotzpox will use every available means to prevent the PCs from entering the treasury (area 14). He knows where one of the three keys is located (the wooden key in area 10) and may attempt to hide it. He can also become *invisible* and steal keys already in the party's possession, or use the *levitate* spell in his *ring of spell storing* to lift the keys out of the party's reach.

13A. Trapezoidal Door.

> This stone door is trapezoidal in shape, becoming wider toward the floor. Carved into its surface is a horned and leering gargoyle fresco with a large keyhole set into its gaping mouth.

Inserting the large iron key (from area 5) into the keyhole causes both door and key to vanish, permitting access to the second door. The door and key will not reappear until the command word "merlock" is spoken. The door can be opened from the inside simply by touching its surface, as there is no keyhole. All three of the vault doors behave this way.

Inserting the large brass key (from area 12) into the door causes the fresco to breathe a 10′ × 10′ × 10′ cloud of paralyzing gas (paralysis lasts 1-8 turns, saving throw vs. poison allowed to avoid effects). If the large wooden key (from area 10) is inserted into the door, the fresco belches forth a 10′ × 10′ × 10′ cloud of corrosive fumes that instantly rusts all nonmagical metallic items in range (enchanted metal armor and weapons are unaffected).

13B. Circular Door.

> The surface of this circular stone door is smooth and unsculpted, save for the large keyhole in its center.

When the large wooden key is fitted into the keyhole, both the door and key vanish, permitting access to the third door. The door and key will not reappear until the command word "tarlock" is spoken. Like the first door, this portal can be opened from the inside simply by touching it.

Anyone trying to insert the large brass key into the keyhole will be burned for 1-6 hp damage.

13C. Lozenge-shaped Door.

> This stone door is diamond-shaped and bears the inscription, "Let he who would enter speak his name." Below the inscription is a keyhole.

If the large brass key is inserted into the keyhole, nothing happens immediately. But if a PC speaks the name "Elzid" while touching the key, the door and key disappear, allowing entry into the treasury vault. The door and key will not reappear until the command word "gorlock" is spoken. Like the other doors, this portal can be easily opened from the inside.

14. Elzid's Treasury.

> Beyond the last portal lies a circular chamber 30′ in diameter. In the center of the room float five identical metal spheres, each 2′ in diameter. The balls hover 4′ above the floor and have seams along their equators. Painted on the chamber's walls are three warrior figures: a human clutching a spear, a dwarf wielding an axe, and an elf brandishing a sword. Runes are painted above each figure.

Each PC has a base 15% chance of reading the runes correctly (thieves may add their read-languages percentages to this base). A *comprehend languages* spell or the ancient languages proficiency can also be used to identify the runes. They read "merlock," "tarlock," and "gorlock" respectively (these are the command words to make the vault doors, areas 13A-13C, reappear). The warrior paintings are harmless until one of the floating spheres is opened, at which time the paintings magically "leap" from the walls into animated existence.

Guardian warriors (3): INT non; AL N; AC varies; MV 9 (human, elf), 6 (dwarf); HD attack as F2; hp see below; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg see below; SD nonmagical weapons inflict only half damage; SZ S or M; ML special; XP 65 each; New monster.

The human wears studded leather (AC 7), has 13 hp, and inflicts 1-6 hp damage with his spear. The dwarf wears plate mail (AC 3), has 12 hp, and inflicts 1-8 hp damage with his battle axe. The elf wears chain mail (AC 5), has 10 hp, and inflicts 1-8 hp damage with his long

sword. When the warriors are slain, their equipment vanishes.

The five spheres float by means of permanent *levitate* spells. The *levitation* persists only as long as the spheres remain in this room. The sphere's upper hemispheres are lids, and all may be opened easily.

Sphere #1 holds Elzid's private journal. In the early entries of the journal, the wizard briefly mentions his numerous alchemical experiments and evil exploits. Toward the end of the journal, however, he focuses solely on his relationship with Erilyn and how gratified he has become. His last entry reads:

> "I shall spend this afternoon picking flowers for her, choosing only those that are as beautiful as she. But, of course, no flower is quite that beautiful. Yet I should close my mind of these thoughts for now, for I sense Zotzpox returning.
>
> "Cruel Zotzpox! He should know not of this affair. Perhaps I should send him back."

Elzid kept the book in this chamber to prevent Zotzpox from reading it. If Eri-

lyn sees the journal, she will certainly want it for herself in remembrance of Elzid.

Sphere #2 contains five scrolls in ivory scroll tubes (worth 25 gp each). Two scrolls were taken from an illusionist whom Elzid killed and have the spells *phantasmal force* and *mirror image* written on them (each cast at 3rd level). The third scroll affords *protection from poison* (including the poison of Zotzpox's stinger). The fourth scroll is a treasure map that leads to somewhere in the High Moor. The last scroll has only the words "thissus" and "thossum" written on it (these are the command words for the iron cobra in sphere #5).

Sphere #3 holds 400 gp, but a *programmed illusion* makes them look like copper coins so long as they remain in this room. A *detect magic* spell will reveal that the coins have been enchanted.

Sphere #4 contains four magical potions (*diminution, sweet water, ventriloquism,* and *water breathing*). The potions are labelled "shrink," "sweet," "speak," and "swim" respectively. There are 1-4 doses per bottle.

Sphere #5 contains an iron cobra that activates the moment the lid is opened. The command word for deactivating the cobra is "thossum." Once deactivated, the cobra can be reactivated with the word "thissus." The automaton's instructions cannot be changed, and it attacks anyone who does not resemble Elzid in appearance.

Iron cobra: INT non; AL N; AC 0; MV 12; HD 1; hp 8; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1-3; SA poison (Type F, save at −2); SD immune to mind-influencing spells and *webs;* nonmagical weapons inflict only half damage; 85% chance to hide in shadows; MR saves vs. spells as W12; SZ S (3' long); ML 12; XP 420; MC14.

A deactivated and undamaged iron cobra is worth 2,000 gp to an interested buyer.

Concluding the Adventure

DMs who are hesitant about letting the party run off with everything in Elzid's treasury should keep one thing in mind: Zotzpox was told to guard the treasury until minions from the Nine Hells arrive to take the loot. If the PCs are slow in reaching the treasury, they may arrive only to find an empty room. Or they could arrive just in time to see a crew of fire mephits cleaning out the place.

Fire mephits (1d4 + 2): INT average; AL LE; AC 5; MV 12, fly 24 (B); HD 3 + 1; hp 13 each; THAC0 17; #AT 2; Dmg 1-3/1-3; SA breath weapon thrice per day; *heat metal* and *magic missile* (two missiles) each once/day; SD *gate* another mephit (25% chance of success); SZ M; ML 8; XP 420 each; MC14 or FF/64. Touching a fire mephit causes 1 hp of heat damage.

The mephits are tasteless and vulgar. They enjoy torturing opponents weaker than themselves and will cast their orders aside to partake in a little fun. When faced with adversity, however, they are quick to flee. They have been instructed to return to the Nine Hells with the spheres in Elzid's treasury, but curiosity will likely have them fishing through the spheres' contents first. Treasures they are likely to leave behind include Elzid's journal and, of course, the iron cobra. When the mephits are satisfied, they seize the spheres and return to the Nine Hells in the wink of an eye. They resort to *gating* in other mephits only when faced with overwhelming opposition.

The PCs may consider the adventure a success if they rescue Erilyn Windfellow, defeat Zotzpox, and deduce that the imp was responsible for the wizard's death (they may even determine how the wizard was slain). Loren Kenither will be pleased to hear the truth. If the PCs are willing to forfeit their monetary reward, Loren will happily identify all of the magical items they recovered from the tower dungeon for free (he is, after all, a renowned sage). Ω

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THEIR MASTER'S VOICE

Continued from page 49

has *identified* and knows not to put on).

This entire collection is thrown in a jumbled mess covering most of the floor. Underneath it all there is a large stone trapdoor. Lertol tried to open this when he first moved in, but it was far too heavy for him, so he piled his loot on top and forgot about it. The areas below are left up to the DM to detail. It is an ideal way to continue and enlarge this encounter.

D. Leucrotta Entrance. This entrance is hidden behind a screen of bushes (detected as a secret door). A 5'-high tunnel leads directly to area B. This was originally a hidden escape tunnel, but the leucrotta use it to come and go as they please.

For each round spent searching the bushes and foliage here, there is a 10% chance of encountering a small poisonous desert snake. Up to 20 can be encountered around the rock formations in the area. Lertol has learned to keep his eyes open to avoid them.

Snake, poisonous: INT animal; AL N; AC 6; MV 15; HD 1; hp 5; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1; SA poison (3-12 hp damage if save vs. poison fails); SZ S; ML 8; XP 65; MC1 (modified). If disturbed, the snakes immediately attack, but they will retreat if left alone.

Concluding the Adventure

If played correctly, there should be little damage to the party from their encounter with this crafty bandit.

If the PCs manage to defeat Lertol, there are several possibilities for continuing the adventure. Where does the trapdoor in the floor lead? To the Underdark? Into a new and undiscovered dungeon? What does the sack of mail contain? There might be some interesting bits of information in the letters that can send the party off on any of a number of adventures. Ω

THE WHITE BOAR OF KILFAY

BY WILLIE WALSH

A dangerous beast—but one with a mission.

Artwork by Bob Gladrosich

"I liked the quasi-Celtic feel of 'The Cauldron of Plenty,' (issue #21), so I tried something similar here," Willie says. He adds that this is his 16th appearance in this magazine and he hasn't burst yet!

"The White Boar of Kilfay" is an AD&D® adventure for six or more player characters of levels 3-7 (30 or more total levels). The party should have as broad a range of classes and races as circumstances permit, and alignments should tend toward neutrality or good. At least one party member should carry a +2 magical weapon.

Whether played alone or as part of an ongoing campaign, this adventure will likely take more than one session to complete. If the DM has access to the *Legends & Lore* book, he might like to look up the Celtic mythos section.

Adventure Background

The forest of Kilfay has long been feared by local chieftains whose lands border the beechwood. Its dark woods sometimes hover with an unnatural gloom and stand silent in the light of noon, so that few go too far among the trees save reckless hunters, who rarely return.

It is commonly known that a large colony of grugach elves makes much of Kilfay its home, discouraging trespassers with traps and snares, and when these fail, sniping from hiding places with poisoned arrows. Much superstition surrounds these grugach, and it is considered unwise to hunt near the woods in certain phases of the moon lest one be enchanted to join the wild elven hunts that are said to career across Kilfay and into the netherworld that men believe elves sprang from. Not surprisingly, the locals seldom venture into the deep parts of the forest. The grugach are never known to travel outside the borders of the beechwood.

Not long ago, swineherds and cotters living near the fringes of Kilfay reported strange occurrences to their chieftains. Small, well-armed parties of the hitherto secretive grugach were seen traversing the forests' tracks and hidden game trails, passing openly within sight of the terrified men. This behavior was such a singular event that obviously something important was happening. After consideration, the druids decided that the elves were making their presence known for some purpose. With the

grugach armed as for warfare, it behooved the chieftains to be on their guard.

The druids' advice was heeded, so when invaders issued from the blackest parts of the forest, the land they entered was not ill prepared. The raiders were not elves, but goblins, and when the men defeated them in a great battle and the survivors of the horde tried to flee into Kilfay, they were slain by arrow fire from the treetops. Then the elves' warning was understood. It had indeed been intended that humans should note the grugach's presence and warlike disposition. But when the chieftains sent messengers bearing gifts and words of thanks to the grugach, they found only the bodies of slain goblins. The elves had returned silently to the depths of the wood.

For the DUNGEON MASTER™

Since before the Battle of Kilfay, a few prominent landmarks and standing stones have marked the boundaries over which it is wiser for forest travelers not to go. Both elves and men respect the borders, but a short while ago a rare meeting proved an exception to the rule.

While riding within their own borders in the woods, a party led by the Ri (King) Conn's son, Muirish, was entangled in a tragic melee.

The men of Talvli were tracking a deer and came to a clearing where an ancient tree had toppled to the forest floor. Sunlight streamed in from the blue sky, and many low plants thrived in the light and heat. The men dismounted where a small brook passed through the clearing, refreshing themselves and their tired mounts. Suddenly, a huge white boar burst angrily through the bushes, pursued by a half-dozen grugach elves on fine horses. The monster was flecked with mud and foam, and fury burned in its red-rimmed eyes. Its tusks were like spear-points as it leapt into the midst of Muirish's party. Arrows skipped harmlessly off its hide as it turned on man and elf alike.

Two fell before the huge boar fled noisily into the woods, seemingly unharmed by any of the humanoids' sword thrusts, spear casts, or lances. The human casualty was Muirish, whose side had been torn open as he leaped at the beast with his bright bronze spear. The other was Gron, highest ranked in the elven party, whose horse shied and threw him into the path of the marauding boar. All others present had wounds and bruises aplenty but were not dangerously hurt.

The Ri Conn was furious that the gods allowed his eldest son die in such an accident, despite his followers' assurances that Muirish's honor had in no part been diminished by the great deed he'd done in attacking the white boar. If it were not for Muirish, they averred, more might have fallen.

Conn was inconsolable. He sat quietly as bards composed laments and women wailed. Three days and nights of feasting preceded Muirish's funeral, and on the fourth day the body was cremated and a cairn raised over the ashes. On the fifth day, Conn gathered his household and broke his silence.

Starting the Adventure

The following information may be read or paraphrased to the players. The DM should adapt place names and personalities to suit his own campaign.

> Passing through the small kingdom of Talvli, you come at last to the Green Briar, an inn recommended to you as suitable for traveling adventurers, and reasonably priced at 5 sp per night. As you enter the muddy yard of the inn, you find a commotion going on as a small crowd spills out of the common room to gather round a messenger nailing a bill to a post.
>
> Breen, the innkeeper, reads the notice aloud for his customers:
>
> "Be it known that the Ri Conn passes sentence of death on the white boar of Kilfay, which lately slew in bloody murder Muirish of the house of Conn. Furthermore, whosoever shall carry out this sentence and bring the dead body of the boar to the Ri shall receive his heart's desire, by the power of the Kingstone."

There is universal astonishment at this proclamation. Breen and his customers believe it flies in the face of the gods, who chose to grant Muirish a warrior's death. Most of them also agree it degrades the Kingstone's power. It seems doubtful that any native of Talvli will take up the Ri's offer.

Innkeeper Breen can fill the adventurers in on the background to the story if they inquire. If they ask about the Kingstone, he can relate what is common knowledge in Talvli.

The stone is a large piece of granite, weathered into the shape of a chair or throne, that stands at the center of the kingdom. It is used in a special ceremony, when the chieftain (or "Ri") is made ruler of the land, and it is said to have been instilled with magic by the Celtic deity, Math (see AD&D 2nd Edition *Legends & Lore*, page 67) to grant each Ri one boon during his reign.

The boon is supposed to be stored against some calamity befalling Talvli, and it is unheard of that a Ri should make the power available to someone else. People are worried that the gods may take offense and blight the land if he does. Breen himself believes that ill luck befalls those who use the power for selfish reasons, and he considers it a dangerous gift.

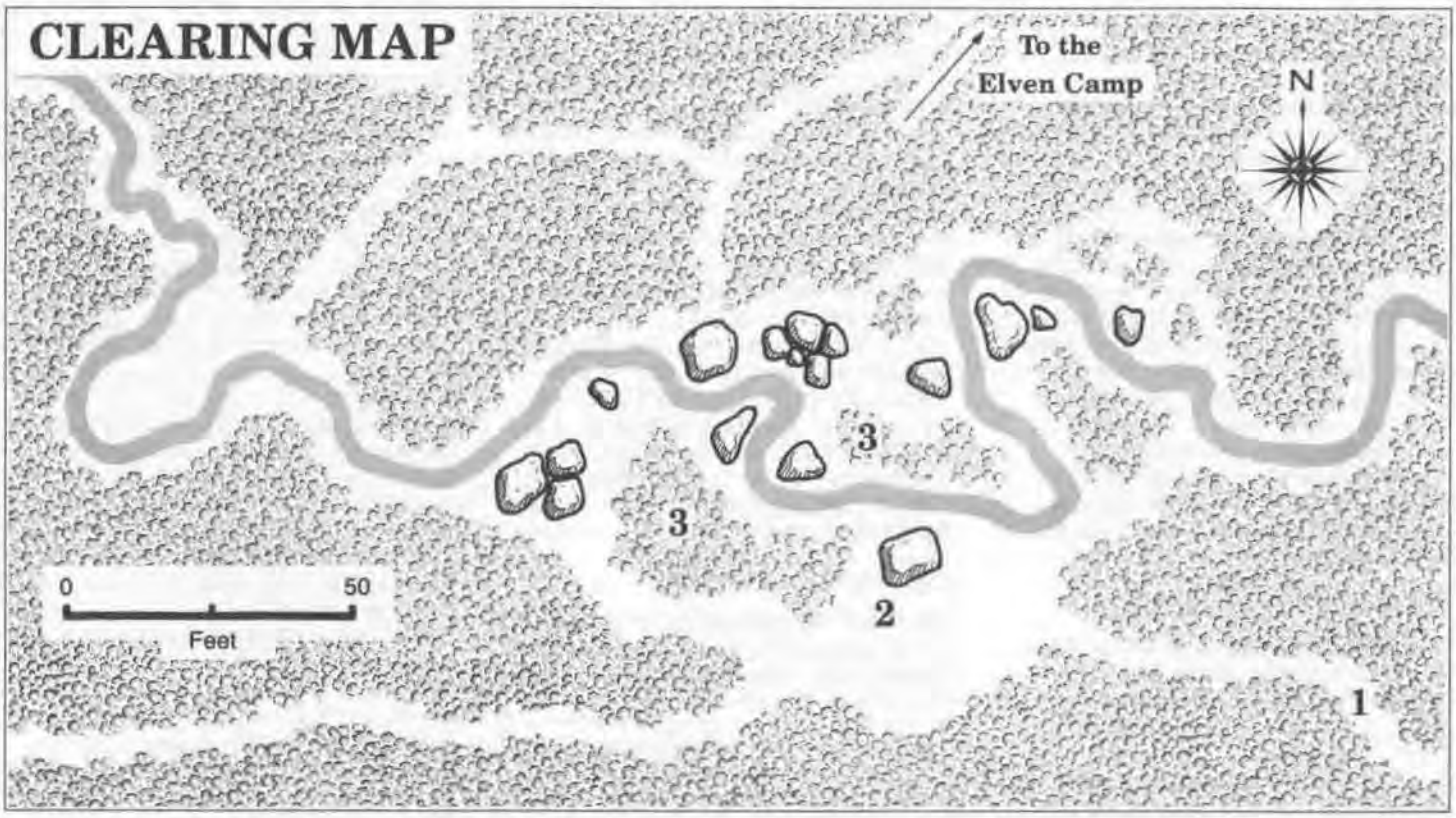
If the adventurers show an interest in hunting the white boar, Breen advises them against seeking out the pavilion of the Ri Conn, whose humor is such that he might inquire (quite nastily) as to why the PCs are wasting time with social calls when they might be out hunting the boar. Breen or any of his customers (all zero-level humans with average statistics) can easily direct the PCs to the trail that leads to the clearing where Muirish met his fate.

The journey to the clearing is without incident. The Clearing Map shows that area of the forest of Kilfay of interest to the adventurers.

1. Forest Trail. This trail winds through the trees in gloomy twilight; the leaves of the beechwoods are peculiarly dark and shady. Little sunlight reaches the forest floor, and at night the trails beneath the trees are pitch black. There are few animals or birds in evidence save one or two watchful crows that flap off noisily to the north as the PCs pass below.

2. Clearing. The path comes out into a clearing created by the toppling of a great tree that lies on its side in the center of the clearing. If a ranger or another PC with tracking proficiency is present, he may examine the earthy floor of the clearing for tracks. A successful proficiency check reveals that at least a week has gone by since the fight. Plants have been crushed or broken, but others have sprung up in their place.

The signs are confused, but large boar prints exit the clearing to the northeast,



crossing the brook before being lost. Ponies' hoofprints (from Muirish's party) come and go from the trail to Talvli, while larger, well-shod horses (the elves' mounts) entered at a gallop from the west and left at a walking pace, around the fallen tree trunk and across the stream to the northwest.

3. Hidden Sentries. Grugach sentries have kept watch from these places since the melee. The post to the north is in a line of dense bushes; the southern cover is the fallen beech. Three elves hide in each position, but unless PCs have the ability to detect invisible objects, the elves are undetectable (−2 to the adventurers' surprise roll). The grugach will not molest the PCs unless they begin wantonly destroying the forest around them, in which case five elves fire arrows coated with a paralyzing poison. One elf runs off for reinforcements.

The grugach are watching here in case the white boar comes back or the men of Talvli launch an attack in revenge for Muirish's death.

If the PCs do no harm, an elven spokesman named Kraf appears from the trees, an arrow nocked in his bow. In broken Common, he warns the PCs they're in mortal danger if they don't answer his questions promptly and truthfully. (He speaks Elvish if any PC elves are with the adventurers.) Kraf demands to know why the PCs are here, on whose authority they travel in Kilfay, what they know of the white boar, and whether they mean harm to the grugach. If the PCs give satisfactory answers, he orders them to wait, then melts away into the undergrowth.

The adventurers might try to leave by another trail or return the way they came, but the DM should have warning shots of envenomed arrows pass close to them as discouragement. Snares have been placed in front of the PCs' path by the time Kraf leaves them. These snares are only 20% detectable by normal means and 90% likely to snare adventurers or their mounts, immobilizing them but otherwise doing no harm.

Kraf and his companions have the following statistics:

Grugach sentries (6): INT average to genius; AL CN; AC 6; MV 15; HD 1+1; hp 9, 8, 7 (×2), 6 (×2); THAC0 19; #AT 1 or 2 (with bow); Dmg by weapon type (short sword, or short bow); SA +1 to hit with spear and bow, poisoned arrows (type O, onset 2-24 minutes, save vs. poison or be paralyzed for 2-12 hours); SD 90% resistance to *sleep* and *charm*, −2 to opponents' surprise; SZ M; ML 14; MC5 (Elf, grugach).

Word (or reinforcement) comes back to Kraf in 20 minutes. His orders are to disarm and blindfold the adventurers, then bring them to await the pleasure of Kraf's leader, Gain. If everyone in the party has been paralyzed, this is easily accomplished. The DM must role-play the situation if the PCs resist. A PC who goes along quietly won't be tied up as well as blindfolded. Whether tied or not, the PCs are turned around and made to wade the stream three or four times to make them lose their sense of direction. After bumping and tripping their way through the woods for half an hour, they are brought to a halt.

The Elven Camp

When the PCs are allowed to remove their blindfolds, they see yet another stream that lies across their path. Behind them, a trail heads off southwest into the forest. Though they're only 30 minutes from familiar territory, they're

75% likely to get hopelessly lost if they make a run for it along the trail. Their escort motions them to cross the stream to the encampment on the far side.

Several grugach tents made from coarse fabric are pitched on a level place across the stream. Elves come and go with deadwood for the cooking fires, or carry braces of fowl or meat into the camp. Many are armed like Graf's party. Overhead, crows perch on branches, cawing noisily at the activity below. Occasionally, an elf feeds a tidbit to a bird perched on his shoulder, or sends it off winging away on some errand into the wider forest.

A tall elf stands outside one of the larger tents in the southeast corner of the camp, speaking to a treant in its slow and sonorous language. They both turn to regard the PCs as they approach. Graf bows to his leader, Gain, and to the treant, Limblithe, before making his report.

The Grugach's Dilemma

The grugach want to slay the white boar to avenge Gron's killing, but the animal has retreated into a section of forest the elves won't enter. Called the Darkwood, the place is avoided by the grugach as warily as men avoid Kilfay. Evil creatures congregate there and goblin raiders issued from it, so it is not traveled by elves. Even treants don't go there.

Gain has sought advice from Limblithe, who suggested that honor might be satisfied if the boar can be slain by someone working on behalf of the grugach. Such an arrangement has never been heard of before, but with the PCs already in Kilfay to kill the monster, fate seems to be pushing the elves toward that solution.

Gain, grugach chieftain: AL CN; AC 1; MV 15; F5; hp 52; THAC0 16; #AT 1 (or 2 with bow); Dmg by weapon type (short sword, spear, or short bow); SA +1 to hit with spear or bow; SD 90% resistance to *sleep* and *charm*, −2 to opponents' surprise; S 18/56, D 18, C 16, I 16, W 13, Ch 17; ML 16; MC5. Gain wears elven chain mail under his forest-colored clothing.

Limblithe, treant: INT very; AL CG; AC 0; MV 12; HD 10; hp 58; THAC0 11; #AT 2; Dmg 3-18/3-18; SA animate trees, cause structural damage; SD never surprised, blend into woodland; SZ H; ML 16; MC1.

If the PCs have behaved themselves, the elves will accompany them to the borders of the Darkwood. Their plan is to surround the region with grugach, then send in the PCs to flush the boar out. Of course, all may not go as planned, and if the PCs have to kill the boar, the elves won't be offended. Since the Ri Conn demands the body of the white boar of Kilfay as proof of its death, the grugach demand its head and tail. The adventurers would do well to agree to these terms, but the DM should consider any reasonable counter-proposals they put to Gain and Limblithe.

In addition to recommending the PCs explore for the grugach, the treant also suggests a time limit on how long the grugach should wait for the adventurers to return. A week is what he has in mind, after which time the elves will give the PCs up for lost. Their safe passage back to Talvli vanishes when the grugach leave. The PCs may change the time limit through negotiation if they wish.

If no arguments remain, a large party of grugach escorts the PCs to the border of elven territory and the beginnings of the Darkwood. The trip is short and uneventful.

The Darkwood

4. Hangman Tree's Ambush. Here the path forks left and right. Near the northern turn-off, what appears to be a medium-sized treant regards the adventurers solemnly. In fact, this "treant" is a hangman tree that uses its hallucinatory perfume to convince travelers it is harmless and friendly. The PCs must pass by the hangman tree to take the northeastern path. If they approach it or take that path, the monster attacks.

If the PCs remember that treants don't frequent the Darkwood, they may avoid the monster by detouring around it and rejoining the path farther along. The monster possesses no treasure.

Hangman tree: INT low; AL NE; AC 3 (body)/5(appendages); MV nil; HD 6+1 hp/year (20 years); hp 56; THAC0 15; #AT 3; Dmg 1-3; SA hallucinatory perfume; MR 10%; SZ H; ML 15; XP 1,400; MC2 (Plant, Carnivorous).

5. Grove of Forgetfulness. The trees here are all tangled and moss-covered. The path is strewn with a drift of old dry leaves, apparently immune to natural decomposition in the damp atmosphere. Growing on the trunk of a twisted oak tree is a patch of obliviax, or memory moss, that will rob memories from one PC as the party passes by. In order of preference, it attacks wizards, priests, any other spell-caster, then any other PC. It tries one attack per round until it is successful (until a PC's secretly rolled saving throw vs. spells fails), then it stays quiet for 24 hours.

If attacked, the obliviax forms itself into a tiny replica of the person whose memories have been stolen and casts that person's spells in self-defense. If a PC without spells has been robbed of memories, the memory moss is defenseless.

Unless the PCs actively ransack the leaf-litter and undergrowth of this area, they are unlikely to find the obliviax, which blends in perfectly with the normal mosses of the wood.

Obliviax, memory moss: INT average; AL NE; AC 10; MV nil; hp 2; THAC0 20; #AT nil; SA steal memories of past 24 hours; SD use stolen memorized spells in self-defense; SZ T; ML 9; XP 35; MC2.

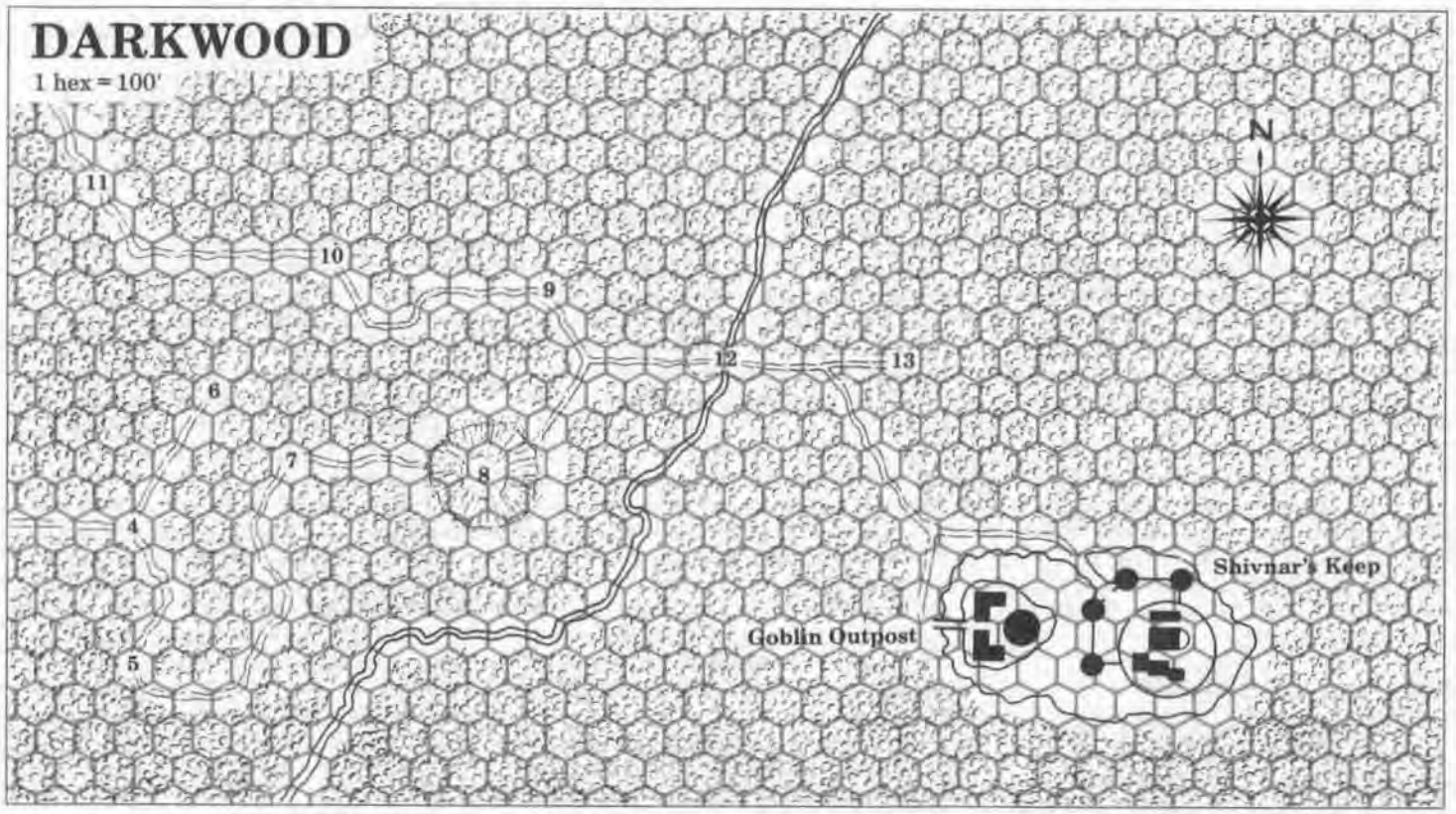
6. Dead End. The path fades into the general confusion of fallen leaves and deadwood. For each round of fruitless search for a trail, the PCs have a 25% chance of meeting a giant skunk nosing about the undergrowth.

Giant skunk: INT animal; AL N; AC 7; MV 9; HD 5; hp 39; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 1-6; SA/SD squirt musk; SZ M; ML 9; XP 270; MC1. This creature is inoffensively turning over leaves in search of a meal. It will not attack unless the PCs bother it.

7. Deadly Roost. The track swings east along a lengthy avenue of tall black trees. If the PCs are traveling the path in daylight, they see that the trees on each side of their route are occupied. For a distance of 50' or more, batlike creatures hang head down from the branches.

If the PCs are taking this path at dusk or dawn, the trees are abuzz with the creatures' activity. At night, the branches are unoccupied.

The monsters are stirges, and if the PCs happen upon them at dawn or dusk, the creatures are 65% likely to be sufficiently awake to attack. During daylight, they've a base chance of only 25% to initiate combat, modified appro-



priately if the adventurers are loud or grab a specimen to examine at close range.

Stirges (30): INT animal; AL N; AC 8; MV 3, fly 18 (C); HD 1+1; hp 6 each; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1-3; SA attack as 4-HD monsters, drain blood (1-4 hp/round to 12 hp damage); SZ S; ML 8; XP 175; MC2.

8. Crater. The path suddenly drops away into a 20'-deep crater. Heroes fleeing from the stirges at area 7 must make a dexterity check to avoid rushing over the edge or suffer 2-12 hp falling damage.

The sides of the crater show signs of intense heat. The soil and rock have a glassy look and the sides of trees facing the hole are blackened. A magical experiment was conducted here with dramatic results. The resulting crater may be crossed without too much difficulty by descending on ropes, or it can be circumvented entirely by cutting a new path through the undergrowth.

At the bottom of the crater are some pieces of glass, worth 50 gp to a jeweler.

9. Owlbear's Ambush. As the PCs travel past this area of thick undergrowth, they are set upon by an owlbear who lies in wait by the side of the trail (−1 from adventurers' surprise roll for this ambush).

Owlbear: INT low; AL N; AC 5; MV 12; HD 5+2; hp 35; THAC0 15; #AT 3; Dmg 1-6/1-6/2-12; SA hug (claw attack of 18 or better indicates hug for 2-16 hp); SZ L; ML 12; XP 420; MC1.

The monster continues pursuing victims as long as they are visible.

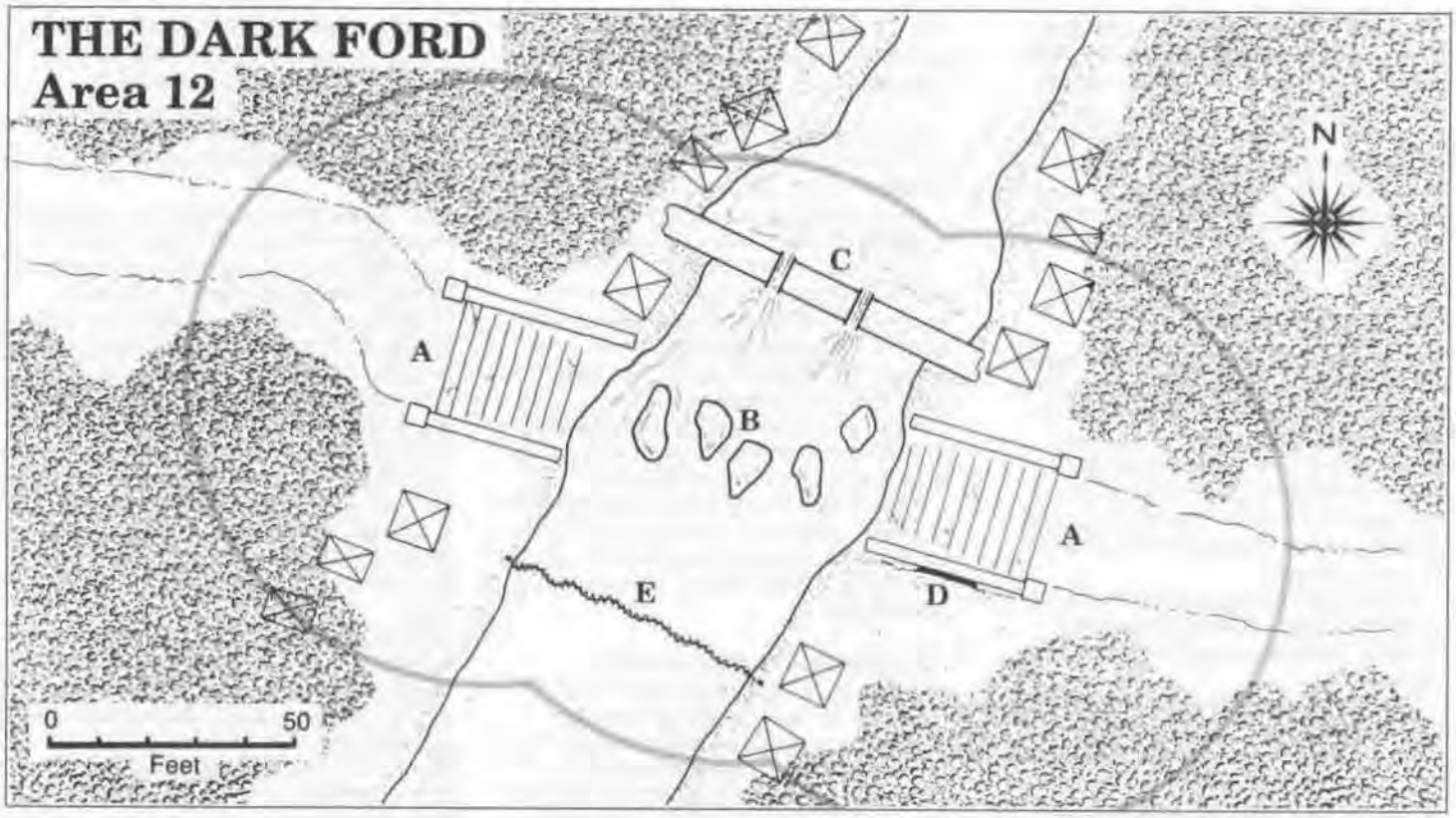
10. Giant Spiders. The trail passes under closely growing trees with many sticky strands of spider webs hanging between the trunks. The gloom of the forest makes the webs only 50% detectable before a PC walks into a strand and gets stuck. The webs extend along the track for 20'.

Giant spiders (6): INT low; AL CE; AC 4; MV 3, web 12; HD 4+4; hp 32 (×2), 31, 30, 29, 24; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1-8; SA web (+4 bonus to hit trapped victims, victim loses all AC adjustments for dexterity while stuck); poison (Type F; death/0); SZ L; ML 13; XP 650; MC1.

Not far from the trail, dried husks of the spiders' grugach victims are hidden among the leaves. These unfortunates still carry 74 gp, a *hand axe +1*, and a vial containing a potion of *invisibility*.

11. Exit to Kilfay. If the PCs continue to follow this trail, they encounter members of the grugach force that is picketed around the Darkwood. The trail has taken them back into the only slightly less daunting forest of Kilfay. Unless the PCs have dealt with the white boar, the elves turn them around and tell them to go back to their task.

12. Dark Ford. The path appears to disappear abruptly into a pitch black wall that rises higher than the trees. This area has been covered by three *continual darkness* spells, cast by a cleric in the employ of Shivnar the wizard, whose keep is farther along this pathway. The area of *darkness* was designed as a hazard, in case any unwanted visitors came along. While Shivnar no longer needs this protection (see "Shivnar's Keep"), the traps still work, and the "clean-up crew" continues to keep the area in working order (see area 12D).



12A. Stairs Down. Unless PCs cast three successive *continual light* spells or a *dispel magic* spell (against 10th-level magic), they reach these steps in complete darkness. A PC who carelessly advances is 50% likely to topple and fall down the unexpected slope, suffering 2-12 hp damage and requiring a saving throw vs. paralysis to avoid falling into the fast-moving stream and being swept toward area 12E.

The woods are riddled with pitfall traps (some shown on the Dark Ford map), each 10′ deep and lined with spikes. If the adventurers try to go around the area of *darkness,* it's 75% likely that one or more of the PCs will step into a pit. Damage is 1-6 hp from the fall, plus 1-4 spikes that deliver 1-3 hp damage each.

12B. Stepping Stones. Each of these stones lies 5′ to 10′ from its neighbor. Unless the PCs use the correct password ("Shivnar"), stepping on the stones triggers the magical sluice gate at area 12C. The DM might like to impose penalties for PCs trying to jump from stone to stone in the magical darkness.

12C. Sluice Gate. The river is dammed here, with twin pipes making a short waterfall upstream of the stepping stones at area 12B. When PCs try to cross the stones without first using the password, the water accelerates into two jets that knock PCs off the stones unless they make a saving throw vs. spells (at a −4 penalty).

PCs washed downstream end up in the *net of entanglement* at area 12E.

12D. Clean-Up Crew. Two trolls live in a hole hollowed out beneath the eastern steps. They were hired to disentangle victims from the net at area 12E and bring them to Shivnar's keep for questioning. Since the fortress is now abandoned, the trolls have taken to free-lance ambush, using the net to provide dinner instead of mere prisoners. Fish, frogs, and anything else (including PCs) entangled at 12E are all considered fair game. Each troll has a 20% chance to fall into a pitfall on his way to haul in the net, taking two rounds to extricate himself from the spikes and clamber out.

Trolls (2): INT low; AL CE; AC 4; MV 12; HD 6+6; hp 48, 43; THAC0 13; #AT 3; Dmg 1d4+4/1d4+4/1d8+4; SA attack three opponents at once, severed limbs attack; SD regenerate 3 hp per round, permanently affected by only fire or acid; SZ L; ML 14; XP 1,400; MC1.

Both PCs' and trolls' attack rolls are at −4 due to the magical darkness.

A *helm of telepathy* (see *Dungeon Master's Guide,* page 171), the property of a previous human visitor, lies rusting on the floor of the trolls' lair.

12E. Net of Entanglement. This net is magicked to entrap anyone coming within 10′ of it in the river. Once discovered, it can be hauled in from either bank and used as an offensive weapon, if two or more adventurers combine to throw it or haul it in. If cut into smaller pieces, the net loses its magical powers (see *rope of entanglement* in the *DMG,* page 179).

Anyone swept off the stepping-stones at 12B, or otherwise falling into the stream above this net, becomes entangled here. The trolls at area 12D use the net to catch their supper. Only a single troll is required to haul in the net.

13. Dead End. The path runs into a thicket where no exits are visible. However, the bushes and undergrowth are infested with giant weasels, eager to make the PCs' toothsome acquaintance.

Giant weasels (6): INT animal; AL N; AC 6; MV 15; HD 3+3; hp 24 (×2), 18, 15, 14 (×2); THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 2-12; SA blood drain (2-12 hp per round); SZ M; ML 10; XP 175; MC2.

The Goblin Outpost

East of the Dark Ford, the path gradually widens until it becomes an earthen road that at a small lake in the center of the forest. Two artificial islands (known locally as "crannogs") have been constructed in the lake. Each island holds a fortification, although the western island is considerably smaller than its partner.

The islands were constructed by depositing layers of earth, stone, and branches, and are quite solid if a little damp.

The Darkwood map shows the general layout of the islands and buildings in relation to each other and to the shoreline. If the PCs explore, refer to the Goblin Outpost and Shivnar's Keep maps.

14. The Approach. A fixed wooden bridge, supported on pile-driven posts in the lake bed, connects the shoreline with the smaller island. On the bridge's eastern end, a hastily erected barricade of sticks and furniture has been knocked down by someone—or something—charging from the shore. PCs with tracking proficiency can find many tracks of wild boar both on the shoreline and at the edge of the island. Six dead goblins are buried under the wreckage of the barricade. They were all poorly armed females and seemed to have died from wounds inflicted by sharp tusks and hooves.

Past the demolished barricade, a short avenue runs between twin barracks to the north and south. The eastern end of the island holds a round fort whose solitary door is firmly closed from within.

Northern Barracks

The building here is squat, only 12' tall. It's built of roughly fitted stone and is windowless except for two slits in the western wall. A 4'-tall, ironbound door in the eastern wing provides entrance.

Most corridors and rooms are dark, and PCs without infravision suffer a −4 penalty to attack rolls if they cannot generate light.

15. Dormitory. The door opens into a stench of unwashed bodies. Wall-to-wall bunkbeds line this area, each bed about 4' long, giving a potential number of 58 occupants. The room is currently empty.

This used to be a dormitory for the fighting males of the goblin tribe that occupied the island. It hasn't been used since the unsuccessful raid by the goblins on the lands about Kilfay. Apart from sodden blankets made worse from the dampness rising from the lake bed, the PCs find nothing worth taking. The beds might be useful as kindling.

If the PCs haven't yet encountered Grubpuk at area 16, any loud noises (such as the overturning or breaking-up of beds) will alert him to the presence of intruders.

16. War Room. This room is furnished with a long table around which there are several stools. A large fireplace on the north wall holds a miserable little fire of twigs and branches. A pile of blankets taken from the dormitory (area 15) forms a pallet near the fire.

If the PCs have been careful and quiet, they find Grubpuk the goblin wrapped up in the blankets, snoring loudly. However, if the PCs made any appreciable amount of noise, the DM should make a morale check for the goblin to see Grubpuk's reaction. If he passes the check, the goblin decides to spy out the strength of the intruders by hiding under the table before they enter the room. If he doesn't feel too brave, he tries to sneak out the door and hot-foot it to the Refuge (areas 19-21) to raise the alarm.

Grubpuk sports a black eye from trying to elect himself acting chieftain of the tribe since the old leader, Fagrack, hasn't returned from the invasion of Talvli. The females aren't the type to take cheek from lowly Grubpuk, who wasn't allowed to travel on the expedition because of his incompetence, so they gave him a good thumping and threw him out of the Refuge. Grubpuk gravitated to this room, where the chieftain and his subordinates discussed their battle plans, and has been "reigning" from here for the past couple of weeks.

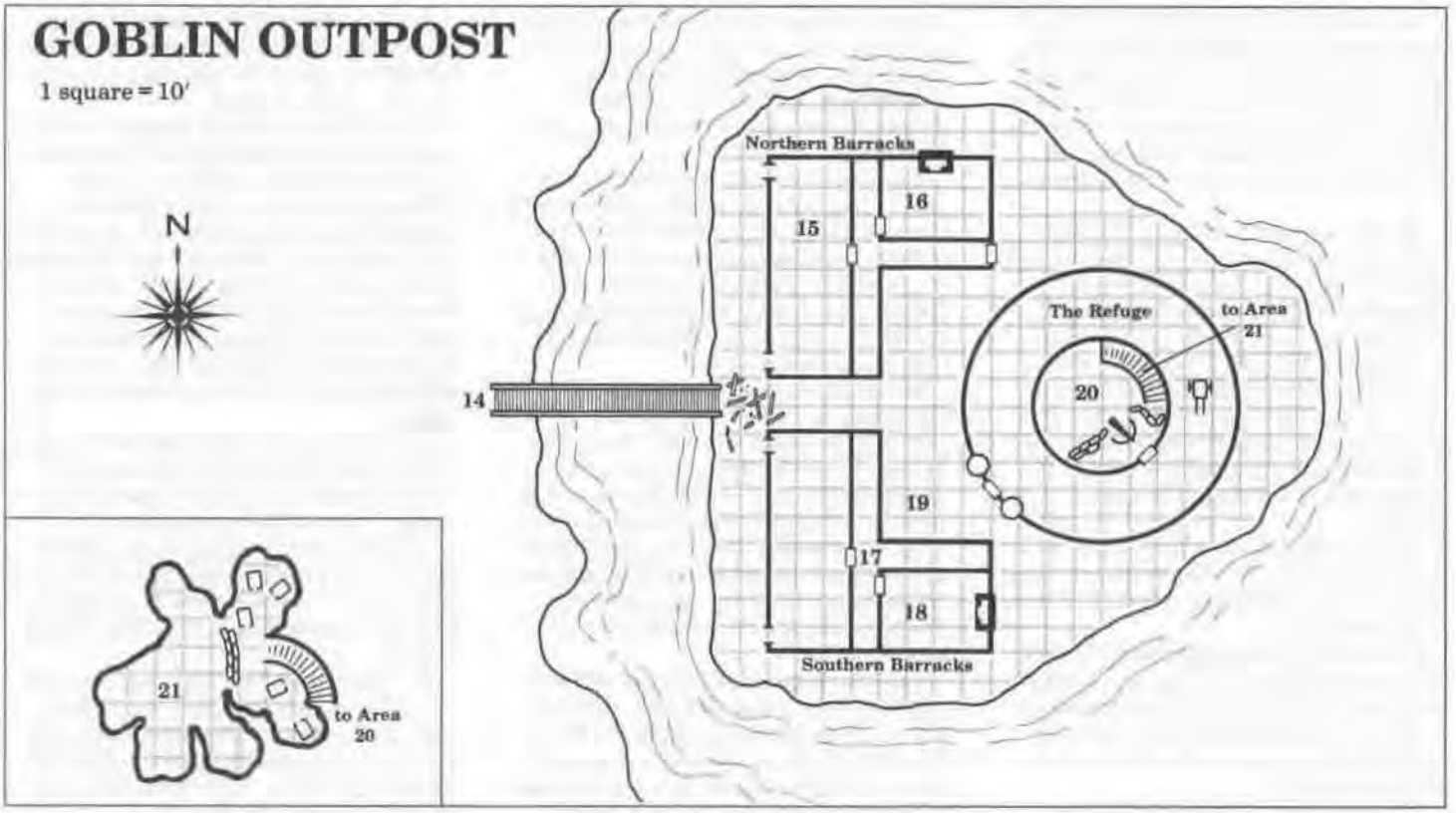
If detected, Grubpuk tries to escape if he can, even trying to confuse his enemies by throwing his bandolier of short swords at them while he uses his legs for rapid transport. If cornered, he might half-heartedly stab someone on general principles, but if he thinks he won't be chopped up or eaten alive, he'll surrender.

Grubpuk knows a monster in the form of a white boar attacked the island the very day the goblins marched away and he was "left in charge." The females valiantly defended the barricades while Grubpuk directed them from a suitable position at the rear. When the boar had ravaged the island a bit, it went off to the east, following the shoreline toward Shivnar's keep. The surviving females and young are holed up in the Refuge, still waiting for the warriors to return. Grubpuk reckons they must be doing really well on their raid because there's been no sign of them for a fortnight now.

Meanwhile, Grubpuk has been keeping the fire going, despite the hardship of being afraid to leave the island in search of firewood. He scavenged weapons abandoned by the other warriors, in order to "protect the females." He has three copper pieces he'll give the PCs if they let him go and don't tell the others he gave himself up.

If the PCs ask who Shivnar is, Grubpuk can tell them he's the one who devised the plan for the Clubfoot Tribe to live on this excellent island, and who does great magic that everyone is afraid of. The wizard suggested the goblins might like to raid a country outside the forest, and he had new weapons made for them to do so. The tribe was to bring back captives because the wizard was running out of animals in his laboratory. The goblins could keep any treasure they found on the way and the captives Shivnar didn't want. Grubpuk hasn't seen Shivnar since the white boar came.

The PCs might like to use Grubpuk as a hostage to gain an advantage over the other goblins. This has one drawback—the other goblins don't care what happens to Grubpuk. The PCs may use him as a decoy, to trick the females into opening the door of the Refuge. This works if the PCs stay hidden, and Grubpuk uses the excuse of making an apology to Malkrun, the chieftain's wife, to get inside. Grubpuk knows the various defenses of the Refuge, and if the PCs insist on getting in there, this informa-



tion may be pried out of him.

If the adventurers kill Grubpuk out of hand while he's helpless, the DM should take note of this for reckoning any alignment transgressions at the end of the adventure.

Grubpuk, goblin: INT average; AL LE; AC 10; MV 6; HD 1-1; hp 4; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type (short sword, Dmg 1-6); SZ S; ML 10; XP 15; MC1.

Southern Barracks

This building is built similarly to the northern barracks, but the entrance from the east stands slightly ajar, and a drift of wind-blown leaves has entered the corridor beyond. There are no light sources in this building unless the PCs carry one in.

17. Nursery. Instead of the macho bunkbeds of the warriors' dorm (see area 15) the beds abandoned here are smaller, though just as messy. If Grubpuk is with the adventurers (see area 16) he can tell them that the females of the tribe lived a complicated and mysterious life of their own in this, the tribal nursery.

Many blankets and all personal possessions have been stripped from this area, leaving nothing of value for the PCs unless they wish to use the wooden beds for some purpose.

18. Kitchens. This room contains three long tables made from rough planks set on trestles and surrounded by many rickety stools. To the east, an iron griddle and a filthy wooden spit rest in the giant fireplace, but the ashes are cold and the fire hasn't been lit in a week or more. Various pots and pans have been upended or discarded in haste, though the unwashed cookware gives an impression of being used continually for years without ever encountering a scrubbing brush.

Tracks and scrapes indicate several heavy loads have been dragged out the door. The females, under the direction of the chieftain's wife, Malkrun, have moved to the Refuge (areas 19-21), abandoning the communal kitchens where they prepared the foodstuffs for the whole tribe. If Grubpuk is with the PCs, he longingly picks at the encrusted pots, remembering the "delights" that were once cooked for him on a daily basis.

The Refuge

Despite the sturdiness of the barracks buildings and the defensive advantages of being on an island, the old goblin leader, Fagrack, had this extra bolt-hole constructed, just in case. It boasts a curtain wall, 3' thick and 14' tall, that may be entered only through a locked, narrow door angled away from the bridge so an enemy can't get momentum going with a battering ram. The door is flanked by twin watch towers where Fagrack's wife, Malkrun, has stationed Dersil and Bilolk, two adolescent goblins. The young goblins ring the alarm bells and peg rocks at anyone who comes near. The towers are accessible from the courtyard inside the wall by ladders.

If the PCs gain the upper hand, Dersil and Bilolk are 75% likely to surrender rather than continue fighting. Their only armaments are the rocks they pitch over the wall at visitors.

Dersil and **Bilolk:** INT low; AC 6; hp 4, 2; Dmg 1-2 (thrown rock); ML 15; other statistics as given for Grubpuk (area 16).

19. Handcart. A handcart is parked here, heavily laden with animal skins, blankets, poorly dried meats, firewood, and spears. It's the goblin equivalent of having suitcases packed and waiting in the hall, placed here for any tactical retreat by the occupants of the Refuge.

20. Strongroom. If the alarm bells have sounded, two goblin females target a loaded ballista at the door to this chamber. They just know how to pull the lever to set off the ballista, which will shoot a vaned dart at the first unwanted guest to open the door from outside, but they're unable to reload it or put up any other effective resistance. Treat targets of the ballista as AC 10 (minus any adjustment for dexterity or magic).

Sug and **Rekky:** INT low; hp 4, 3; #AT nil (1); Dmg nil (2-12 with ballista); ML 6; other statistics as given for Grubpuk (area 16).

The sandbags arranged in this room give the goblins a −2 to their initiative roll on the round after firing the ballista. They'll use the presence of this obstacle to attempt an escape down the stairs to area 21.

A curved weapons rack holds four more darts for the ballista. If the PCs wish to capture the device for their own use, they must use the talents of a person with carpentry proficiency to disassemble the ballista and remove it through the narrow door. Only one check is required to both dismantle and rebuild the device successfully. A failed roll indicates the machine has been damaged and is inoperable.

21. Last Stand. If the adventurers follow the stairs downward from area 20, they come out in the bolt-hole that the goblins excavated below the lake bed. Water drips incessantly from the damp walls and ceiling. To the west, the opening into the living quarters has been built up with sandbags. North and south of the stairs are large wooden boxes that serve as kennels for the tribe's watchdogs, five worgs, that attack intruders as soon as they detect them entering the cavern.

Worgs (5): INT low; AL NE; AC 6; MV 18; HD 3+3; hp 24 (×2), 21, 18, 16; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 2-8; SZ L; ML 11; XP 120; MC1 (Wolf).

Malkrun and 30 other females and young stay behind the sandbag barrier. Only the chieftain's wife is vicious enough to fight the adventurers. Treat the other goblins as AC 10, hp 3, with no attacks. Killing the defenseless should earn the PCs no experience points and may have repercussions on good-aligned PCs.

If a *fireball* or *lightning bolt* spell is cast in this cavern, there's a 65% chance the resulting tremors bring down the ceiling, flooding the cavern with lake water and necessitating a hurried retreat to the surface by anyone fighting below. The DM should adjudicate this possibility as it arises.

Malkrun is more valuable as a prisoner than as a corpse, as she has some information about the white boar. She knows it can't be harmed by normal weapons, because she led the force that tried to defend the island from the boar when it attacked. The boar also seems to have some purpose; she thinks it was looking for something. Beyond that, Malkrun doesn't know the boar's origins or purpose.

She does know that Shivnar wanted captives for his experiments, and that this was the reason the tribe went to war. Her husband, Fagrack, was summoned to Shivnar's keep and saw some of the monstrous beings that Shivnar was interested in reproducing. Fagrack's shaken description of a "huge worm with teeth," which he allegedly saw in Shivnar's laboratory while the wizard was outlining his plans for an expedition to Talvli, is the only information that Malkrun can give.

Malkrun, goblin chieftain's wife: AC 6; hp 7; Dmg by weapon type (hand axe, Dmg 1-6); ML 10; other statistics as given for Grubpuk, areas 16. Malkrun wears studded leather armor and carries a shield.

The PCs may think that the white boar is a creation of Shivnar's—one that escaped—or that it is in some way connected to the wizard. Let them.

Shivnar's Keep

The gates of the fortification stand ajar. A close examination shows they've been scratched and scored from the outside, but were opened from within, not battered down.

If the adventurers have already explored the goblin outpost (areas 14-21), they'll recognize signs of the white boar having been here. The scores and scratches on the doors have obviously been caused by the monster.

Pushing the left-hand gate uncovers an ivory wand jammed beneath it. The object is a *wand of magic missiles* with 15 charges remaining.

Just inside the gates, signs of a struggle mark the cobblestones of the courtyard. Bloodstains and sooty marks indicate some form of physical and possibly magical combat took place here not more than two weeks ago. The badly decomposed body of a human male in bloodied gray robes lies in the courtyard, halfway between the gates and the inner keep. Spent arrows and vaned darts lie here and there about the open space.

The body is that of Shivnar the mage, who opened the gates to take on the white boar in combat. He came off the worst. Most of Shivnar's guards and servants have fled, though the boar is still around, waiting for the PCs to open a door to the room it must enter to complete its business here (see "The White Boar").

On the mage's belt is a large keyring with five keys. One opens the locked door to area 25, another opens area 28, two more are used to enter the locked safe at area 36, and the fifth opens the sealed room at area 41.

Northern Gate Tower

Entrance from the ground-level is through a narrow door set into the eastern wall of this circular tower. The door is unlocked and opens inward easily when pushed.

22. Guardroom. Dust covers the floor and furnishings of this chamber. An oval table still holds the spoiled remains of a partially eaten meal. Stools are pushed back from the table as if the diners all left in a hurry, days or possibly weeks ago. A weapons rack to the northwest holds three pikes. Three cupboards arranged about the circumference of the tower contain moldering foodstuffs and some moderately clean eating utensils.

A spiral staircase, as dusty as the rest of the floor, rises upward along the wall. Loopholes for archers follow the rise of the stairway for the 20' climb.

23. Dormitory. The stairs come out in a room containing five bunkbeds with soiled and disheveled bedding. There don't seem to be any personal possessions in the room. Another stairway

rises to a trapdoor in the ceiling, 15' above.

24. Firing Platform. The trapdoor from area 23 opens onto a platform on top of the tower. A ballista, mounted on a movable wooden capstan, points southeast. Three vaned darts for the machine lie beside it on the floor. The ballista is unloaded and in working order.

If a PC has weapon proficiency with a ballista, he may operate the machine at no penalty. Nonproficient PCs suffer the appropriate penalty for their class. The device may be dismantled and removed in the same way as the one at area 20.

Southern Gate Tower

The portal to the courtyard is locked, but a thief can gain entrance on a successful open-locks roll. Shivnar's keyring also has a key that fits this lock. Otherwise, the door takes two points of structural damage to break down.

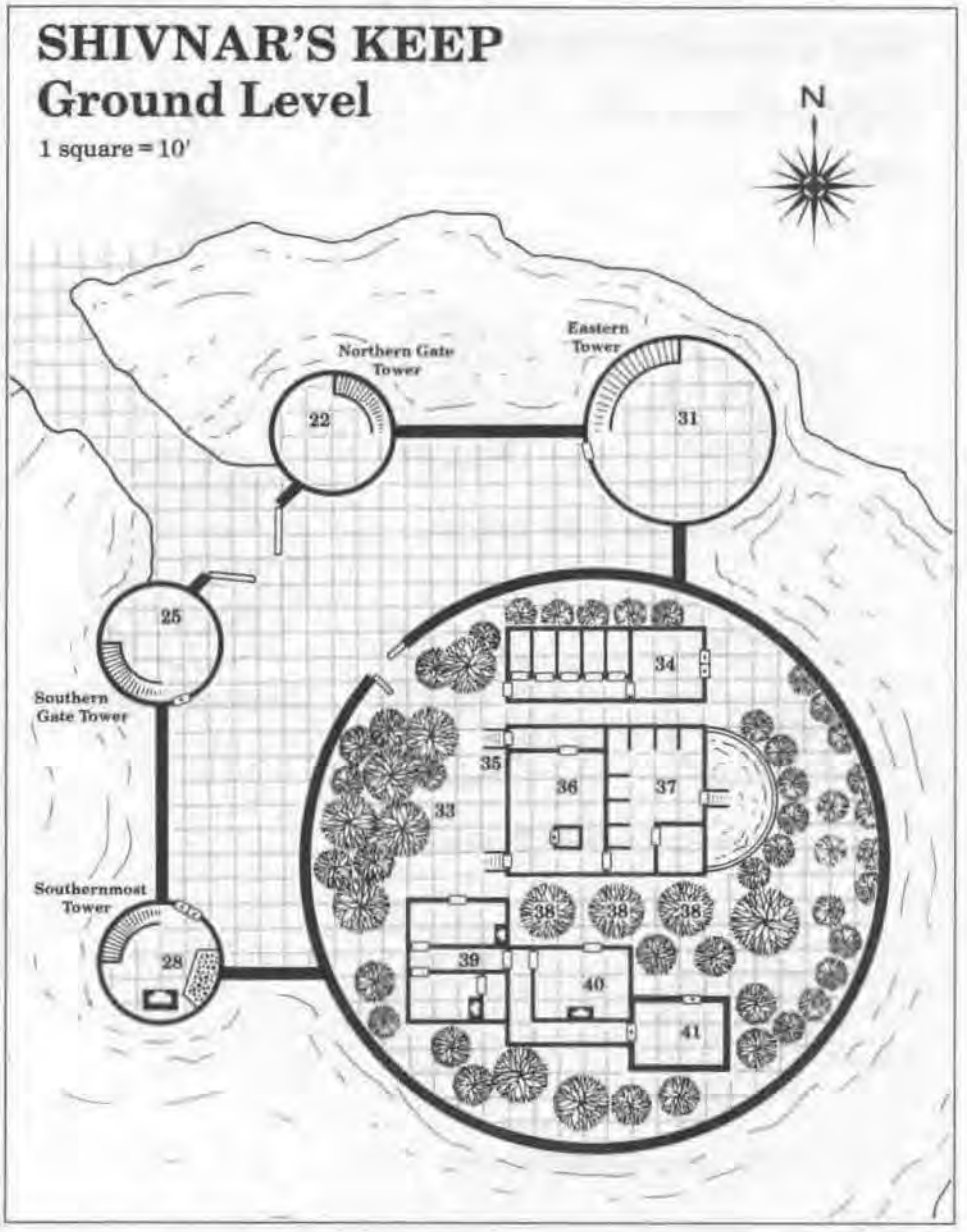
25. Store Room. The ground floor is piled high with wooden boxes, the type that usually hold large quantities of arrows and darts. All are empty. In the center of the floor is a round wooden table and three chairs, all dusty. On the table is a half-bottle of cheap wine.

The chamber looks as if it hasn't been used for perhaps a month or more. Stairs rise 20' upward to the floor above. Loopholes for archers follow the line of the stairs.

26. Kitchen. The spiral stairs come up into a kitchen area. To the southeast, the chimney-pipe of an iron stove disappears through the outer wall. The woodbox beside the stove is empty, as is the cupboard behind the grubby table and chairs. Another stairway leads upward to the roof.

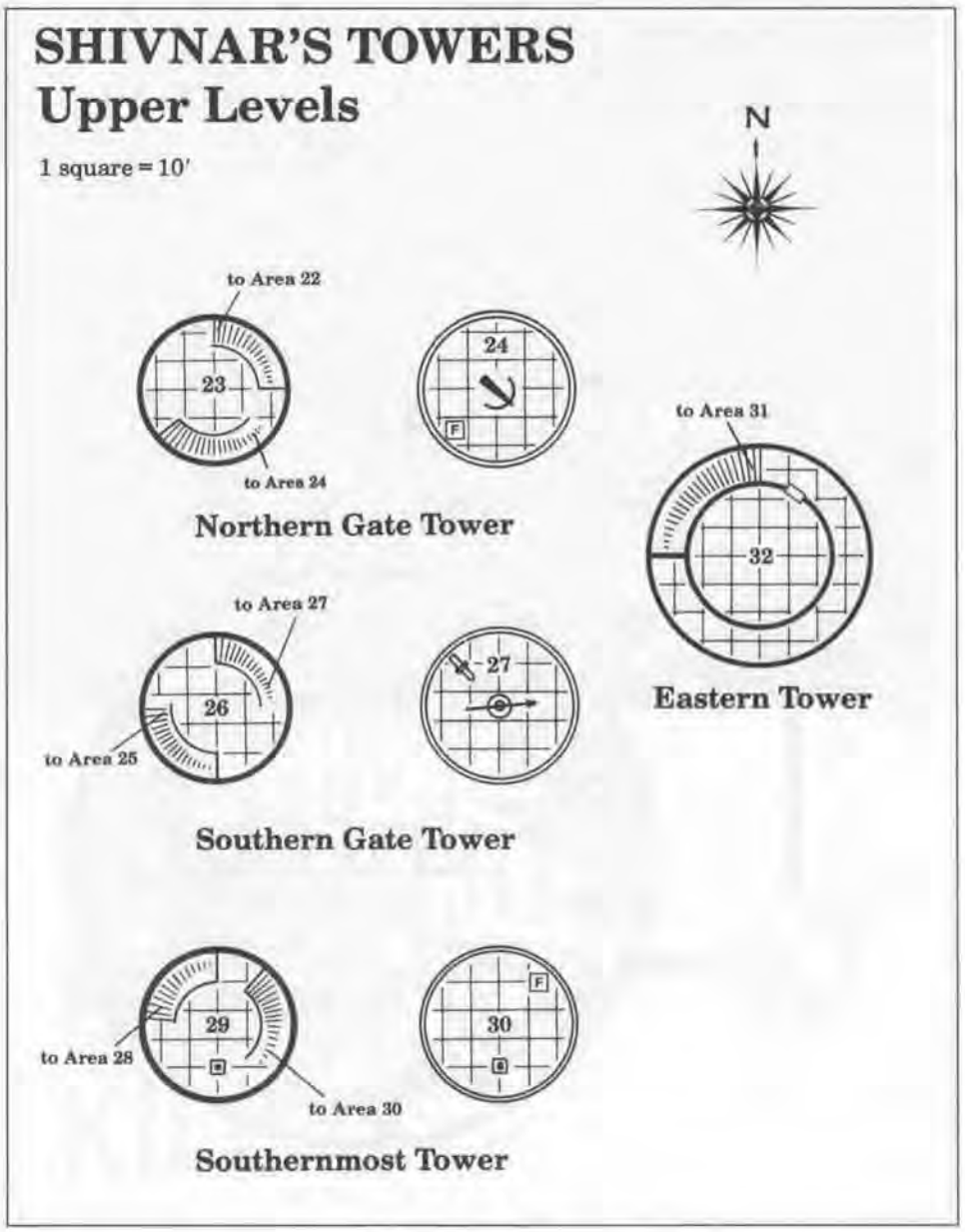
27. Rooftop. The stairs from area 26 stop after 15' at a trapdoor leading into the open air. The rooftop has a large spyglass on it, pointing northwest, that may be removed if PCs unbolt it from its tripod. It isn't a particularly good spyglass, but it might be of some use to the adventurers.

An iron wind-vane, seemingly counterweighted by a particularly repulsive gargoyle perched a little way along its arrowlike length, is bolted to the center of the platform. If PCs don't trust gargoyles on general principle and fire missiles at the counterweight, it remains inert until magical weapons or spells are used or someone approaches to inspect the ironwork. When it attacks, the gargoyle (named Crin) makes a grab for the nearest PC and continues to concentrate exclusively on that PC from sheer bloody-mindedness.



Crin worked in the keep as a willing hit-man for Shivnar, who was indirectly responsible for the arrival of the white boar in Kilfay. The wizard also armed and organized the goblins, as outlined earlier, using Crin as a threat to keep them in line. Though Crin witnessed Shivnar's demise at the gates, the PCs will have difficulty getting a blow-by-blow account from the gargoyle unless they have some means of *charming* the monster or otherwise getting the upper hand.

Crin, gargoyle: INT low; AL CE; AC 5; MV 9, fly 15 (C); HD 4+4; hp 30; THAC0 17; #AT 4; Dmg 1-3/1-3/1-6/1-4; SD +1 or better weapon to hit; SZ M; ML 11; XP 650; MC2.



Southernmost Tower

The entrance to this tower has been modified to take a pair of double doors, secured from outside by a large deadbolt and padlock. If PCs don't want to pick the lock, they might use the key from Shivnar's keyring or do two points of structural damage to break down the doors. From the courtyard, the PCs can just see the tip of a chimney on the rooftop of this tower.

28. Smithy. The ground floor has been made into a workshop, with a heavy anvil set on a wooden base in the center. The hand tools usually arranged about the anvil have been removed. To the east, a good heap of charcoal is still intact in its storage bin. A coal shovel lies on the floor nearby. The forge-fire is ashen-gray and inert. Above it, a square copper cowl hangs from a square vent that enters the ceiling and floors above and finally emerges as the chimney visible from the courtyard.

Behind the forge-fire and scattered about the floor is an assortment of scrap iron ranging from cracked pots to rusted cold-iron weapons of goblin make, the latter either nicked or broken. There are also oddments of railings and reinforcement bars associated with building work.

This tower housed the weaponsmith hired by Shivnar to outfit his goblin strike force before their foiled mission. The smith moved on when his task was finished, carrying his tools with him to his next place of employment. He never met up with the white boar.

A spiral stair winds upward to the next floor, 20' above.

29. Bedroom. The floor is carpeted by a deep-pile woolen rug, worth about 200 gp but presenting interesting difficulties with encumbrance and transport if the PCs wish to take it. The large, plush bed in the middle of the floor is made up. The chimney from area 28 serves as a pillar and heater at the foot of the bed. Another stairway circles 15' upward to the rooftop.

30. Rooftop. The tower's roof is devoid of interest but for the chimney, which adds another 10' to the height of the 35'-tall tower. A large mass of branches and leaves plugs the chimney-pot, where a pair of gray-backed crows are busy building a nest in the disused vent. They are unrelated to the birds that accompany the grugach, but quite as intelligent.

The PCs can communicate with these crows using *speak with animals* spells, though the birds won't take too kindly to the PCs' interest in their doings. They know of the goblin activity on the western island and remember Shivnar used to dump some nice meaty tidbits into the lake (and lately provided them with some of his own, when he failed to slay the white boar). The crows also know that the white boar is inside the wizard's keep and hasn't come out recently.

The birds don't care to accompany the adventurers, regardless of inducements offered. If they are attacked or if their nest is disturbed, they attack for one melee round before flapping off to the safety of the surrounding forest.

Huge crows (2): INT semi; AL NE; AC 6; MV 1, fly 27; HD 1-1; hp 7, 6; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1-2; SA 10% chance of striking opponent's eye; SD cannot be surprised during daylight; SZ M; ML 11; XP 35; MC5 (Raven).

Already integrated into the growing nest are two sparkling gems worth 10 gp and 5 gp.

Eastern Tower

This building is larger than the other towers. A glass dome is just visible from the courtyard below. The door to the tower is unlocked.

31. Play Room. Evidence of violence fills the area. Four man-sized statues have been soot-blackened and covered by impact marks, as has a statue of what appears to be a giant anteater. A small section of the floor seems to have been targeted by a *stone to flesh* spell. It bleeds as if wounded.

Shivnar used this room to practice offensive and defensive spells, and to test the *wand of magic missiles* the PCs may have found at the gates. The statues were kept as targets for his workouts.

A wide stairway rises steeply to the rooftop, 30' above.

32. Observatory. On the roof level, a glass dome placed over most of the platform serves as a makeshift observatory. Inside, a table holds star charts held down by a paperweight made from a burnt-out *crystal ball*. The ball is useless but may prove entertaining if the PCs attempt to get it operational.

A wooden bucket half filled with charcoal rests near the table, apparently for refueling the iron brazier in the center of the room. The fire is out and hasn't burned in some time.

A bookshelf to the east contains eight works on magic and astrology. A wizard who spends a month or longer studying this small library may add the *ESP* spell to his spell book. Any PC with astrology proficiency who spends a similar time in study gains a +1 bonus to his ability check.

Inner Keep

The inner keep is not actually fortified for defense. Instead, it's surrounded by a plain wall of stone, 15' high, and about 10' thick. Twin doors opposite the main gates of the island stand open. Inside, the PCs see many shrubs, a grove of trees, and several buildings.

33. Tall Trees. A stand of tall trees here is the home of a small party of tasloi that the wizard was interested in studying. Since Shivnar's untimely demise, the creatures have scavenged the area and armed themselves with spears and nets. They've depleted their initial stock of food and are not beyond trying to pick off stragglers from the party of adventurers, though they avoid a direct confrontation while the option of an ambush remains (see area 38).

Tasloi (15): INT low to average; AL CE; AC 5; MV 9, climb 15; HD 1; hp 8 each; THAC0 19; #AT 2 or 1; Dmg 1-3/1-3 or by weapon type (spear or entangling net; victim hit by net must roll a successful open doors check to get out; PCs with strength less than 15 are automatically trapped); SA surprise (−4 to opponents' roll); SD hide in shadows at 75% probability; SZ S; ML 10; XP 35; MC2.

34. Stable. Shivnar kept horses for use by his servants and for pulling the chariot he sometimes took on journeys into the forest. The outer door to the stable has been kicked down, as have the doors to the stalls inside. The horses made their escape into the woods when the white boar came and the servants fled without making arrangements for their feeding.

Shivnar's chariot is stored in the shed to the east of the stalls. It can hold three people at a pinch and requires two chariot-trained horses to operate. Any PC with charioteering proficiency and suitable horses can take the vehicle. The chariot is highly decorated and worth 400 gp, though it's designed for rapid transport, not war, and is 25% likely to disintegrate if used in battle.

35. Laboratory Building. This building is reached via two stone stairways leading to heavy but unlocked doors. Three *glassteel*-reinforced windows in the west wall overlook the tasloi community at area 33. PCs peering in through these windows can look into the laboratory at area 36.

36. The Lab. When someone first opens a door to this room, everyone within 10' must make a saving throw vs. poison or be 50% likely to pass out for 1-3 minutes from the horrible stench that gushes out.

In the middle of the floor is a dissecting table with the decomposing corpse of one of the tasloi on it. Tools and implements used in the operation seem to have been put down hurriedly, as if the wizard was interrupted in his work. The various knives and saws here are worth about 3,000 gp to a mage interested in necromancy. They're easily transportable (provided they're packed carefully), so the PCs would do well to take them along.

Around the walls are cages of small furry creatures, long dead. A glance indicates cruel treatment at the hands of their keeper: many bear scars or have had various amputations.

A desk near the windows holds a book detailing a number of evil experiments. It seems Shivnar was intent on developing a creature he could use as a weapon of war, as the last page states:

> "... With the proper incantations and suitable adjustments made to the physical characteristics of the creature, I have found it necessary to seal it in the strongroom while the process of growth continues in its venom glands. This will be a breakthrough of godlike proportions! Though Lugh himself tried, he'd fail to harm me with this beast unleashed."

The latter reference is to the Celtic deity Lugh and is a bit of an exaggeration on Shivnar's part. Though the PCs may think the white boar is the monster Shivnar writes about, it is not. It came from another source entirely (see "The White Boar").

Flicking back through the journal, the adventurers find it often refers to "interbreeding," "bulettelike," and "fiery breath." There's mention of the fruition of a plan to create a special strongroom described as being constructed of adamantite steel and equipped with *temporal stasis* spells. Here, creatures created by the mage could mature without causing harm to the mage or his staff. This information should warn the PCs of the possible effect of opening the locked portal at area 41.

South of the dissecting table, an iron safe is set into the stone blocks of the floor. The PCs might mistake this for the "stronghold" and take precautions against what might be inside. However, this is just where some of the materials used in the wizard's research are stored. The door to the safe is *wizard locked* (at 14th level) in addition to having two keyholes. The spell must be negated by any of the usual means before the keys from Shivnar's body will turn.

Other means of breaking into the safe may suggest themselves. A large charge of smokepowder (if the DM allows arquebuses in his campaign) might cause enough damage to open the locks. A

fireball spell, closely followed by an *ice storm* spell or similar magic, will shatter the brittle iron if it fails a saving throw vs. disintegration (see *DMG*, page 39).

If PCs dislodge the iron safe from the floor (such as by casting a *rock to mud* spell) and haul it out through the ceiling (which is how it entered), they could manage to haul it to the top of one of the towers and tumble it back to earth in the hope of smashing it open. Of course, ceramic or glass containers inside will shatter, regardless of whether the safe itself opens after such a jolt.

The safe weighs 2,000 lbs.; if simply bashed, it has 150 structural points. Any weapon used against it must make an item saving throw vs. crushing blow each time or the item breaks.

Inside the safe are many of the rare and exotic ingredients used by the mage in the course of his experiments. A small clay pot holds a preparation that, when smeared on a wound, has an effect similar to a potion of *extra healing*. The ointment is sufficient for six doses.

A stoppered jar holds powdered diamond to the value of 3,000 gp. Another holds iron filings of no commercial value, though they might be useful in creating a circle of protection against certain forms of undead if used by a priest.

Four sticks of incense may be worth 500 gp apiece to a necromancer, while a sealed bottle of beholder ichor is worth 1,000 gp as is; if opened, it quickly spoils. A large glass tank contains six pseudodragons preserved in an amber fluid and each valued at 50 gp. There are also two lead bars and two gold bars, the former worth 5 gp each and the latter worth 100 gp each.

Two slabs of beeswax, worth 50 gp each, and two unused black candles of 100-gp value lie on a shelf by the door. A 20'-long silver chain left on the floor is worth 70 gp. A copper cauldron etched with occult symbols would fetch 100 gp.

A dozen delicate glass objects used in the laboratory are worth 1,000 gp total but are difficult to transport normally, as each has a 90% chance of shattering by the time the PCs return to civilization.

Part of Shivnar's spell book is lying open near the glass objects; the spells include *jump, taunt, wall of fog, strength, whispering wind,* and *infravision*. Other pages appear to have been torn out (see area 39).

37. Prison Cells. This room was some kind of a prison or menagerie. All the cells and cages to the north have been broken open by the tasloi, who liberated some of their kind via a large hole in the roof and butchered other unfortunate species for food. They were afraid of the laboratory, because they had heard strange noises in it from time to time, and so it remained undisturbed.

The cells to the west hold only the thin and wasted corpse of an owlbear. To the southeast, the jailer's room is blood-stained and ransacked.

A doorway to the east opens onto a narrow flight of steps that lead down into a still, scummy pool. When Shivnar thought of it, he'd throw the byproducts of his laboratory to the four crocodiles that live here. PCs wading into the pool in search of valuables are liable to be attacked by the hungry monsters.

Crocodiles (4): INT animal; AL N; AC 5; MV 6, swim 12; HD 3; hp 20, 19, 18, 12; THAC0 16; #AT 2; Dmg 2-8/1-12; SD surprise (−2 to opponents' surprise roll); SZ L; ML 9; XP 65; MC2.

38. Retch Plants. This trio of palm-like trees is a variety of retch plant that Shivnar bred to tolerate a temperate climate. If the PCs pass below them, the plants are each 20% likely to drop one of their fruits on the adventurers. Anyone banging against, running into, or climbing a retch plant causes 2-5 of the globes to "attack."

The tasloi are aware of the plants' properties and keep well away from them. However, if any of the tasloi remain in the stand of trees (see area 33) and see the PCs falling victim to the attacks of the plants, the loss of the victims' strength points will tempt the creatures to make further netting attacks.

Retch plants (3): INT non; AL N; AC 8; MV 0; HD 5; hp 32 each; THAC0 15; #AT 2-5; Dmg nil; SA nauseating fluid in fruit (5'-radius splash, causes victims to retch and vomit for next three rounds; victims have half normal strength for nine turns); SZ H; ML 8; XP 275; MC11.

39. Wizard's Living Quarters. The tasloi have kept away from these buildings in fear of the places Shivnar frequented. Shivnar lived in these rooms with his concubine and servant, Yara.

The northern room is a sitting room, with a large plush couch, twin armchairs, a fireplace, and a liquor cabinet. The floor is covered with a thick wool carpet worth 200 gp. Six empty brandy bottles are strewn about haphazardly on the carpet, and there are two empty bottles in the cabinet as well.

The room to the south is a bedroom, with an attached bathroom. The bed is a large four-poster and is unmade. It's still warm and has obviously been slept in recently. A wardrobe against the wall holds the mage's robes and three expensive, skimpy dresses (50 gp each). A fireplace to the southeast holds glowing coals and ashes that were once pages from Shivnar's spell book.

40. Kitchen and Dining Room. A small well is set into the floor just inside the west door. Large cupboards stand about the walls, and open cupboard doors show shelves of intact food. At the east end of a long pine table, a figure is slumped face down on the tabletop. An empty brandy bottle stands nearby, next to a broken chair leg.

This is Yara, Shivnar's concubine and servant. She's survived here because of the tasloi's reluctance to visit areas still smelling of Shivnar and because of the vast stock of foodstuffs. She's also raided the liquor cabinet, as seen by the empty bottles strewn about the building. Contrary to expectations, she's donned more sensible clothes from Shivnar's side of the wardrobe and has liberated the chair leg as a makeshift club. If disturbed, she lashes out with this piece of wood, but she fights at −2 to hit from being slightly sozzled.

Yara knows most of the information relating to Shivnar's experiments; she also knows that he carried a keyring holding keys to the safe at area 36 and to the sealed chamber at area 41, among other places. She can relate that two weeks ago, sentries reported a monstrous wild boar had come from the forest and was pounding at the main gates. Arrows didn't seem to bother it. Shivnar himself went to see what was going on, taking his *wand of magic missiles*. There was a terrific fight, from which the mage didn't return.

Having slain Shivnar, the boar rampaged about the fortress, driving out the servants and the few remaining soldiers. Yara saw it pound continually at the sealed chamber (see area 41). The boar seemed to consider its next actions

carefully before it sped off out of the castle and away.

Yara, free to escape now that Shivnar was dead, was nonetheless afraid to venture into the outdoors as the tasloi had armed themselves and were dangerous and difficult to avoid. In any case, that same evening the white boar returned, covered with foam and blood. It was last seen outside the sealed chamber before it wandered into the thick shrubbery around the walls.

Yara has despaired of getting out of the castle safely and has taken to the bottles of brandy Shivnar stocked up on. If the PCs treat her kindly, she'll sober up and give what information she can about the fortress, its dead master, and what she saw of the white boar.

Yara: AL CG; AC 6; MV 12; 0-level human; hp 4; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type (chair leg, Dmg 1-3); S 12, D 18, C 13, I 13, W 10, Ch 15; ML 16.

41. The Sealed Chamber. The walls of this building are dull black and made from adamantite steel. The whole edifice radiates magic, but the exact type is not determinable. The steel doors are locked but open readily if the key from the wizard's keyring is used in either door.

Inside, the room glitters with many pinpoints of colored magical lights, a result of the magical process of combining adamantite and steel to form an armor plating. If someone enters the chamber and the doors are closed behind him, he must save vs. spells each round he remains there or be the victim of a *temporal stasis* spell. Though most body functions cease to operate while this spell is in effect, the nature of this vault allows both natural and magical healing or regeneration as per normal.

A glass tank filled with a bluish fluid rests on a rectangular pedestal in the center of the room. A large creature suspended in the liquid seems identical in all respects to a bulette, preserved by the *temporal stasis* spell on the room. In fact, while it floats in the tank the creature is generating certain modifications bred into it by Shivnar.

Once the doors to this room are unlocked, a warning-whistle sounds once each minute for 10 minutes. At the end of 10 minutes, the *temporal stasis* spell is negated and must be recast to work again on the room. A round later, the bulette-mutation awakens and becomes belligerent. The following round, it bursts out of its holding tank. If any PCs still stand staring in the next round, it closes to attack.

If locked inside the room after it awakens, the monster needs 6-36 rounds to break through the walls or floor of the sealed chamber. In the meantime, its waking has attracted the attention of the white boar.

The White Boar

The gods largely ignored Shivnar's meddlings in the forests of Kilfay and the Darkwood, as his actions didn't threaten the overall harmony of the area, but when his breeding of the bulette-creature neared completion, they took notice.

After a conference among the gods, they decided to intervene with a magical creature of their own. What creature other than a boar could better symbolize the strength and bravery, the solidity and fearlessness of the Celtic deities? The gods agreed that a powerful avatar, suitably presented in the form of the white boar, should be dispatched to Kilfay to slay the monstrous creation and bring Shivnar to justice. And so it was done.

Though fully as intelligent as a human being, the white boar had to admit that *someone* had overlooked some important matters. No one had bothered to find out where in Shivnar's keep the bulette-monster was secreted. Being a majestic, fearsome, almost-indestructible creature of the gods was just fine, but a boar doesn't have hands and can't open any doors that can't be battered down! Slightly embarrassed, the boar has remained on the Prime Material plane, though Shivnar and his servants have either been slain or routed. It cannot return home until the bulette is destroyed.

Mulling things over, the boar thought it likely a group of humanoids could open the locked door of the holding area, so it resolved to fetch some aid. As communication was somewhat limited in boar form, it acted to ensure the locals took an interest in its affairs. When Gron's party saw the white boar, they were enticed to hunt it, thinking the boar an ordinary—if much enlarged—creature of the forest. Immune to harm, the monster fled into the clearing where Muirish's party had paused to refresh themselves, slew one member from each group, and then

disappeared into the Darkwood to await the inevitable hunters. It knows someone will come eventually, discover the recently abandoned keep, and open the holding area. If necessary, the boar can put in an occasional appearance to whet his assistants' appetites for exploration.

Encountering the Boar

As soon as the heroes open area 41 or destroy the magical stasis holding the bulette-mutation hidden there, the white boar bursts from its hiding place to do battle. The boar may surprise the adventurers as it rushes past them and tries to get to the other monster before it wakes up properly, but the boar attacks PCs only if they obstruct its major task. Even then, it attacks only to drive them off or disable them, rather than to kill. If it has no other choice, it will kill PCs to give it peace to fight the bulette.

If the bulette-mutation escapes the confines of the sealed chamber, the white boar is at a disadvantage, as the bulette can use its power of moving through the earth to avoid its enemy or attack with surprise.

The DM should include the PCs in any action involving the white boar and its enemy. Remember, though the boar cannot speak, it can think as well as a human and understands Common. If given a breathing-space, it could conceivably answer the PCs' questions by means of theatrical nodding, shaking its head, shrugging, stamping its foot, or whatever, but its most pressing goal is to destroy the other monster. If the PCs can aid it in this task, so much the better. If they insist on getting in the way, they're in for trouble.

If the PCs have captured the *helm of telepathy* from the trolls in area 12D, the DM may allow them to communicate with the boar. However, the DM must first decide if the helm is sufficient on its own. Can the PCs speak "boarish" or does the boar think in Common? Will a *speak with animals* spell work on an intelligent creature?

Statistics for the white boar of Kilfay and for the bulette-mutation are given at the end of the adventure.

Concluding the Adventure

The DM should roll dice as normal for combat with the bulette-mutation. If the bulette is killed, the boar's mission is over, regardless of whether the boar itself slew it. The avatar returns to its home plane, leaving behind the fleshy body it was given to accomplish its mission. The PCs see the boar begin to glow ever brighter from within. It falls to the ground, and the adventurers get a split-second glimpse of a humanoid shape rising up from the body and dissolving toward the west. It may smile or scowl, depending on its interaction with the PCs before its task was completed, but it will not linger. It has some carefully phrased admonitions to deliver to certain gods it meets concerning their choice of bodies for its trip to the Darkwood.

Once the avatar has departed for its own plane, the PCs may claim their trophies from the now-lifeless body of the boar, as agreed at the beginning of the adventure.

If the boar is slain by the PCs before the bulette-mutation is disposed of, both the avatar's body and spirit have failed in their divine task, and it is consigned to an ignoble fate in the hall of a deity where it must serve as a slave for 300 years. The PCs will see the whole carcass dissolve into mist. The avatar-spirit glows briefly as it rises into the air, wailing forlornly, before disappearing westward with a clap of dramatic thunder. If the bulette still lives, the PCs become the targets of its attacks to the conclusion of the combat.

If they survive, the PCs will obviously have no trophies to bring to the grugach or to the Ri Conn, though they'll have an impressive story to tell that will occupy the imaginations of the populace for many years to come. The PCs should be aware that they have made a mistake or that the white boar was more than it appeared to be, even if the DM has to drop some big hints.

The gods may provide even larger hints. The DM should consider the option of giving each PC donkey's ears for a year and a day as a nonremovable punishment from the gods for allowing their avatar to fail in its mission. The DM shouldn't do this if the bulette killed the boar, only if the PCs kill it or encourage the bulette to kill it through active help or through inaction.

On leaving the Darkwood, the PCs encounter the grugach picket line that rings the forest. The elves listen to whatever tale the party chooses to tell, then take appropriate action. If they're satisfied with the adventurers' story, the PCs are again blindfolded and returned to the clearing where Muirish and his party first encountered the boar.

The Kingstone

The Ri Conn is true to his word, if the adventurers bring him the dead body of Muirish's killer. He has a feast prepared (not of the white boar, which is burned outside the Ri's fortress and whose ashes are widely scattered) that lasts for three days and nights. The story of the white boar is repeated each night in the PCs' honor.

At dawn on the fourth day, the Ri brings the surviving adventurers to the granite stone at the center of his kingdom. Sitting in the thronelike seat, he mutters a secret incantation and bids the PCs elect a single representative to name their hearts' desire. The DM should conduct what follows with reference to the *limited wish* spell. The chieftain ages one year when the PCs have made their one-and-only *limited wish*.

Further Adventures

If the adventurers free the bulette-mutation without killing it, they may encounter the monster later when it leaves the root-cluttered soil of the woods for the easier-to-cross fields and pastures of Talvli and its neighbors. The PCs may be hired or ordered to dispose of the monster whose arrival in the kingdom suspiciously coincided with their own.

Other areas of the Darkwood, unknown to man or elf, may contain unexplored ruins or some of Shivnar's servants, who seek vengeance on the PCs for their supposed involvement in the death of their master.

Likewise, if the white boar was killed with aid from the adventurers, druids in the service of the Celtic deities who sent the avatar to the Prime Plane may wish to punish the PCs involved. Ω

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The White Boar

CLIMATE/TERRAIN:	Woodland/Any
FREQUENCY:	Unique
ORGANIZATION:	Solitary
ACTIVITY CYCLE:	Any
DIET:	Omnivore
INTELLIGENCE:	High (14)
TREASURE:	Nil
ALIGNMENT:	Neutral
NO. APPEARING:	1
ARMOR CLASS:	−2
MOVEMENT:	18
HIT DICE:	9 (72 hit points)
THAC0:	11
NO. OF ATTACKS:	1
DAMAGE/ATTACK:	3d6
SPECIAL ATTACKS:	Nil
SPECIAL DEFENSES:	+2 or better weapon to hit
MAGIC RESISTANCE:	50%
SIZE:	M (5′ tall at shoulder)
MORALE:	Fanatic (20)
XP VALUE:	5,000

As explained in this adventure, the white boar was specially created by the Celtic deities to house the spirit of a godlike avatar sent to destroy Shivnar and his monstrous creation, the bulette-mutation. It resembles a huge member of the boar family, though it remains a solitary creature and normal boars will have nothing to do with it, even attacking their keepers to run away from it if necessary.

Combat: The white boar attacks in the manner of its form, biting and ripping with its tusks, though it does not share the wild boar's ability to fight into negative hit points. However, it requires a +2 or better magical weapon to cut through the monster's hide, so it is somewhat better off than the creature it was modeled after. It uses its human-like intelligence to progress toward its goal—the destruction of Shivnar's creation—and the DM should play it accordingly when the PCs encounter it.

Habitat/Society: The white boar remains a solitary creature in this adventure. If the spirit inhabiting its body has another social order on its own plane, that is a matter beyond the scope of this module.

Ecology: The white boar, being a unique creature, exists only as long as the bulette-mutation remains alive, or until the boar itself is slain in combat. It has no place in the natural order of the forest.

The Bulette-Mutation

CLIMATE/TERRAIN:	Temperate/Any
FREQUENCY:	Unique
ORGANIZATION:	Solitary
ACTIVITY CYCLE:	Any
DIET:	Carnivore
INTELLIGENCE:	Animal (1)
TREASURE:	Nil
ALIGNMENT:	Neutral
NO. APPEARING:	1
ARMOR CLASS:	−2/4/6
MOVEMENT:	14, Burrow 3
HIT DICE:	10 (73 hit points)
THAC0:	11
NO. OF ATTACKS:	3
DAMAGE/ATTACKS:	4d12/3d6/3d6
SPECIAL ATTACKS:	8′ jump, breath weapon
SPECIAL DEFENSES:	Nil
MAGIC RESISTANCE:	Nil
SIZE:	L (9½′ tall, 12′ long)
MORALE:	Steady (11)
XP VALUE:	5,000

The monster described in this module is identical to the bulette of the *Monstrous Compendium* and is derived from the original creature by magical and biological experimentation by the wizard Shivnar.

Combat: Like a normal bulette, the mutated variety attacks anything it considers edible. However, in addition to its bite and front claw attacks, there is a 65% chance per round of combat with a foe that has actually caused it to lose hit points that the mutated monster will breathe a cone of fire 20′ long, with a base diameter of 5′, that does 3-18 hp damage (save vs. breath weapon for half damage). The creature has been given venom glands by Shivnar to enable it to breathe fire, and it can use this attack up to four times per day.

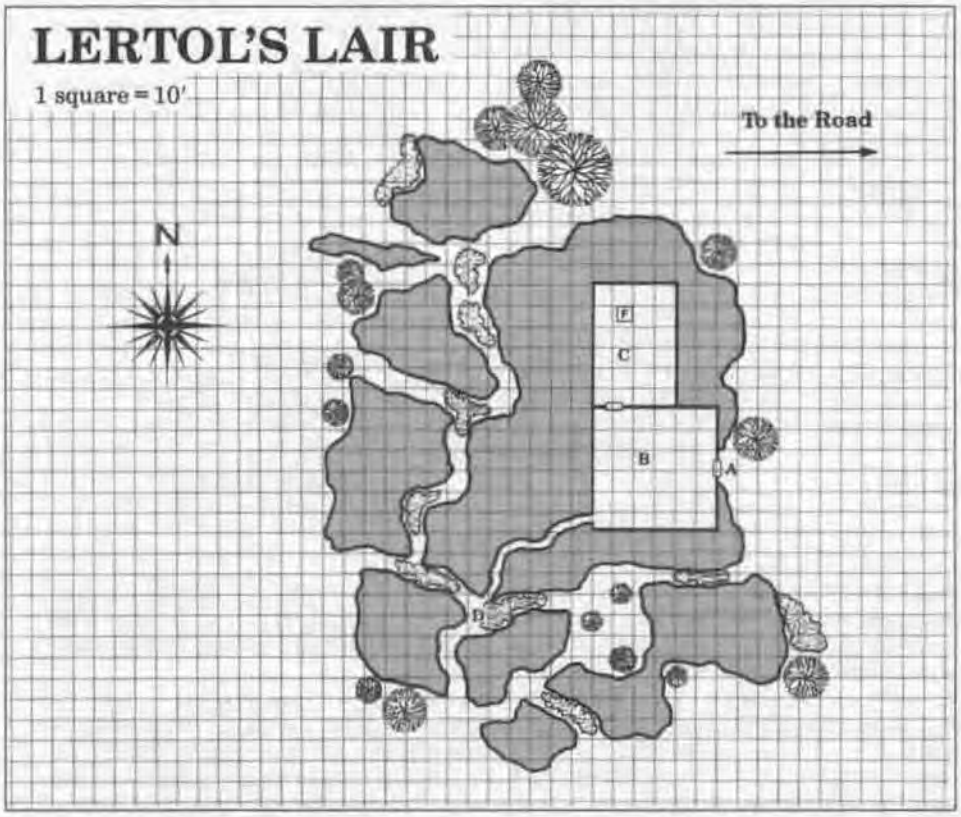
Like the normal bulette, the mutated variety has AC −2 around its heavily fortified head, AC 6 in the vulnerable area beneath its crest, and AC 4 in the tiny area of the orbits of its eyes. When injured or cornered, it may also jump up to 8′, employing its rear feet in attacking. It doesn't employ its breath weapon in the same round that it jumps.

Habitat/Society: If this specimen escapes from Shivnar's lair, it may, at the DM's option, meet with others of its kind and produce offspring. In this unlikely event, half of any young will be normal bulettes, the other 50% will be identical to Shivnar's creation.

It conforms to normal bulettes with regard to territory and disposition.

Ecology: If the beast is released into Kilfay, it isn't long before large tracts of woodland are either undermined or destroyed by fire. In 1-3 weeks, if not slain, it moves into the area of Talvli to hunt the humans and their livestock, burning houses and toppling forts as it tunnels about the land. If slain, its armor may be fashioned into suitable shields as outlined in the *Monstrous Compendium.*

THEIR



"Everybody's a fool for a lost kid."

BY ROGER BAKER

"Their Master's Voice" is an AD&D® game SideTrek adventure for a party of 4-8 player characters of 2nd-4th level (about 18 total levels). This adventure can be set in any wilderness of dry chaparral with few trees, miles from the nearest town. It is intended to be a low-risk encounter, with the worst result being the loss of some valuables and pride.

For the DUNGEON MASTER™

The area the PCs are passing through has become the stomping grounds of an outcast wizard, a chaotic-neutral enchanter named Lertol. Banished from every nearby town for his cruel behavior, Lertol has been living in the wilderness for nearly a year. He blames his ill fortune on the inability of "common folk" to bear his homely appearance and sharp wit, putting none of the blame on his habits of kicking dogs, insulting all who speak to him, and "borrowing" things, among other unwholesome practices.

While traveling toward yet another town, Lertol was attacked by an adult leucrotta. He managed to kill the beast but barely escaped with his life. Only after the battle did he hear the plaintive cries from the leucrotta's nearby lair. When he investigated the cries, he found two leucrotta pups, barely three weeks old.

At first Lertol cared for the pups, whom he named Blackie and Whitey, because he thought he could sell them, but several months ago he hatched an even better idea.

Lertol uses the leucrotta's unique mimicking ability to lure passing travelers into an ambush. With the help of his spells, he then robs his victims and escapes to the safety of his lair before anyone realizes what has happened.

"Everybody's a fool for a lost kid," Lertol is fond of gloating to his only audience, Blackie and Whitey. "If things keep going this well, I'll soon be rich enough to do whatever I like. Those townsfolk will have to let me back in."

"When's dinner?" his audience usually responds, being totally uninterested in Lertol's ambitions.

Campsite

At dusk, after a long day of traveling, the PCs find themselves on a road, miles from the comfort of an inn. Few trees grow in the dry earth, although a couple of oaks have managed to thrive next to a small stream surrounded by waist-high bushes and grass. A few low hills break the complete flatness of the landscape.

A clearing by the stream holds evidence that previous travelers have made use of this spot to rest for the night. The cold remains of a small campfire occupy the center of the clearing, and a few random trinkets have been carelessly tossed aside. These objects can be found on a roll of 1 or 2 on 1d6 by anyone actively searching the campsite. They are nothing more important than a broken ceramic cup, a lost fork, and a copper piece or two.

It looks like a wonderful place to camp, and the PCs should settle in for the night.

Lertol has trained Blackie to approach this area at night and cry like a lost child while remaining unseen outside the firelight. Whitey then mimics the sounds of someone searching for the child from farther away. The combination is very believable. Both leucrotta remain hidden in the tall grass and bushes during the deception, to shield them from infravision or missile attacks.

When one or more of the PCs goes to

look for the lost child, the leucrotta slowly and carefully lead the searchers away from the camp. They are careful not to move too fast and make the investigators suspicious. Meanwhile, Lertol approaches the camp from the other side and attacks the remainder of the group using his spells, which have been carefully chosen for this situation.

As soon as some of the PCs have gone to investigate the disturbance, Lertol casts a *deeppockets* spell on himself and *sleep* spells on the remainder of the party in camp. He saves his *hold person* spell to deal with anyone still awake. After casting an *invisibility* spell on himself, he enters the camp and loots the unattended baggage, attacking and killing no one. He never totally cleans out his prey and never kills anyone unless his own life is at stake. To do either would assure a determined pursuit and more trouble than he wants.

After taking just a few rounds to pilfer money, food, clothing and any obviously magical items, Lertol gives an "all clear" whistle to his leucrotta friends and retreats to his lair, using his *boots of varied tracks* to confuse pursuers. If he feels it is necessary, he pauses to cast a *misdirection* spell before leaving the campsite. These precautions have so far enabled him to elude pursuers.

If his spells fail or the party looks too strong, Lertol aborts the attack and flees. The enchanter will always err on the side of caution, although he will sacrifice his leucrotta accomplices to ensure his own escape.

Lertol: AL CN; AC 5; MV 12; M5 (enchanter); hp 12; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg by spell or weapon type; S 5, D 15, C 9, I 15, W 14, Ch 5; ML 12; XP 975; dagger, quarterstaff, special multipocketed trousers for *deeppockets* spell, *boots of varied tracks.* Spells: *color spray, sleep* (×2), *spook; deeppockets, invisibility, misdirection; fly, hold person.* Lertol has an *armor* spell cast on himself at all times, providing AC 6 until he takes 13 hp of damage.

Lertol's temperament has not improved during his long stay in the wilderness. He still treats those around him cruelly, but Blackie and Whitey are now the objects of his wrath. He is extremely cautious when carrying out his plan, and thus far nothing has gone wrong. His goal is to be liked by all, and he figures that the wealth that he is amassing now will buy him that respect.

Blackie and **Whitey** (leucrotta): INT average; AL CE; AC 4; MV 18; HD 3 (youth); hp 18 each; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 2-16; SA mimic any voice; SD kick in retreat for 1-6/1-6 hp; SZ L; ML 6; XP 120; MC2 (modified).

Blackie and Whitey have grown up with Lertol as the only family they have known. He has treated them harshly, however, and they dislike him because of it (thus their low morale). As the leucrotta mature, their hatred has become stronger and stronger. At some time in the not-too-distant future, they will gain enough courage and self-confidence to kill and eat Lertol. For now, however, he provides food and water fairly frequently and doesn't expect too much of them. The leucrotta are still children both physically and emotionally. They behave like smart-aleck kids, never taking anything too seriously and always providing a snappy comeback to any comment.

Lertol's Lair

Located in an abandoned dwarven guard post, Lertol's lair is a quarter mile up the road from the campsite. The post was built inside a sizeable rock formation several hundred yards from the road.

Dwarves have a 30% chance of immediately recognizing the formation as an old guard post, even from the road. Other races, excluding elves, have a 10% chance. Elves have only a 5% chance.

A. Entrance. A finely crafted door made entirely of stone seems to be the only entrance to the guard post. The chance to locate this entrance is the same as for finding a secret door. Dwarves, however, have a 4-in-6 chance to recognize the entrance.

Lertol has *wizard locked* the door, however, making it impossible to open normally. If the *wizard lock* (5th level) cannot be dispelled, a *knock* spell will open the door. If magic fails, the door can be forced open if destroyed (50 hp damage against AC 0).

B. Guard Post. Simple frescoes decorate the walls and represent the height of dwarven stoneworking skill. Two *continual light* spells provide illumination.

Lertol has converted this room into a living area. The simple furnishings that he has been able to pilfer from travelers are placed about the room. These include a cot covered with woolen blankets, a small oil-fired stove, two chests, a collapsible table covered with papers and three books, and a barrel filled with clear rainwater. A brace of freshly killed rabbits hangs from the ceiling near the door, out of reach of Blackie and Whitey. A pile of blankets on the floor in one corner seems to be the bed of one or more large dogs. Two large feed bowls are placed nearby.

The first chest contains many types of food, both fresh and preserved; the other chest contains clothing of various sorts, all suitable for the climate.

The books on the table are *Hunting for the Amateur, A Wizard's Guide to Astronomy,* and Lertol's spell book, which contains all his memorized spells as well as *armor, burning hands, identify, magic missile, mount, continual light, darkness 15' radius,* and *suggestion.*

C. Storage Room. This room is half full of bundles and boxes of various types, all of which undoubtedly once belonged to unwary travelers. This ill-gotten loot includes a variety of common items (the inventory of which is left up to the DM™ but should not exceed 600 gp) in addition to the following:

— 10 pieces of correspondence, opened and read,
— a large bag filled with 18 small bags, each containing 1-6 gp, 2-12 sp, and 3-18 cp,
— a small locked box containing 24 pp, 80 gp, 135 sp, and 230 cp,
— a bag of 2-8 semiprecious stones,
— a *short sword +1,* and
— a *ring of weakness* (which Lertol

Continued on page 28

THE MUD SORCERER'S TOMB

BY MIKE SHEL

Two common elements mixed together create deadly peril.

Artwork by Gerry Sawyer

This is Mike's second publication in DUNGEON® Adventures. He says that crypts and tombs have always been his favorite kind of adventure settings. In addition to S1 Tomb of Horrors, *he would also like to acknowledge other classic TSR modules and their authors as inspiration: S2* White Plume Mountain, *C1* Hidden Shrine of Tamoachan, *and WG4* The Forgotten Temple of Tharizdun.

"The Mud Sorcerer's Tomb" is an AD&D® adventure for a party composed of 6-8 characters of levels 10-14 (about 82 total levels). The tomb provides a challenge for all types of players: those who enjoy solving puzzles and riddles, and those who itch for a fight. However, a party whose methods lean primarily toward hack-and-slash solutions may be very frustrated by this module, as there are long periods of time when one's sword can sit quietly in its sheath.

The party should be composed of a balance of character classes as all skills will be called upon. A high-level spell-caster or two will come in handy on numerous occasions, as will a high-dexterity thief, members of the fighter class, and a cleric with access to *neutralize poison* spells.

This adventure was inspired by Gary Gygax's classic S1 *Tomb of Horrors.* It can easily be slipped into nearly any campaign locale.

For the DUNGEON MASTER™

The Jezulein cult was born of the great cultural turmoil that rocked the entire continent seven centuries ago. While established institutions of religion fell into chaos, many scholarly individuals (especially students of sorcery) turned to the ancient, esoteric writings of Jezule the Nebbarite, a long-dead wizard-priest of dreadful reputation. His lunatic scrawlings had been repressed for years by the state churches, most of which were rapidly losing their once-formidable influence. In this environment, the new Followers of Jezule (Kaia Jezulein, in their own language) flourished, converting many to a bizarre mix of wizardly mysticism and water and earth elementalism. It was this latter feature of their beliefs that earned them the disparaging label of "mud sorcerers." In typical Jezulein style, they heartily adopted this berating jab as an appellation.

Little is now known of the mud sorcer-

ers, as information about their cult was guarded with fanatical secrecy. It is known that they delighted in riddles and conundrums, disdaining those who couldn't equal their mental prowess. Their practices involved the worship of evil elemental forces and the performance of various anti-social acts in secret ceremonies. The Jezulein cult flowered in the political chaos that ruled the day, and many new adherents were won as the mud sorcerers grew in wealth and power.

However, the Jezulein were not ones to rest on their laurels. Through the use of forbidden oracles, the mud sorcerers probed the future, and what they saw did not please them. Their divinations revealed that the political chaos would not continue forever, and when a new government subdued the reigning anarchy, efforts to eradicate the Jezulein would begin in earnest. Exactly when this persecution would begin was unclear, but the ruling council of the cult, the Iron Circle, sat in dark chambers debating methods by which the Jezulein might thwart this fate.

After heated argument, an audacious, insidious plan was agreed upon. Huge labyrinthine crypts would be constructed beneath the earth, where the most powerful of the mud sorcerers would hide in *temporal stasis*. Meanwhile, in the land above, trusted minions would carry on the Jezulein traditions in secret, waiting for the day when they could awaken their odious masters from long, shadowy sleep and return to the glory and power of the degenerate past.

Eight years after the members of the Iron Circle committed themselves to their earthbound slumber, the Kospian Alliance re-established the rule of law on the continent with the famous Compact of the Twelve Lords. The Jezulein did not anticipate the ferocity with which their cult would be stalked, and those minions who had been trusted with the secrets of the hidden crypts were laboriously hunted down and put to the sword in what historians call the Great Purge. To those in the land above, a new dawn was breaking. But below the earth, the malevolent Jezulein masters slept in dark ignorance.

Hundreds of years passed, and the cult seemed destined to be nothing more than a distasteful footnote in some obscure sage's tome. Then the first tomb was located. Adventurers of great renown began uncovering the labyrinthine crypts of Szecolar, Mishtot, Baakar Mot, Jillal, and several other mud sorcerers. Many such adventurers did not survive these intrepid expeditions, but those who did emerged with enormous wealth and tales of unspeakable horror. Many put an end to their adventuring careers on the spot, thanking the gods for their lives.

Over time, the locations of some 30 Jezulein tombs have been discovered and explored, but the sites of more than 20 tombs of Iron Circle members have yet to be found. Many facts about the Kaia Jezulein still lie shrouded in mystery, and exploration of a mud sorcerer's tomb is a task not to be undertaken lightly. This module describes the tomb of the mud sorcerer Tzolo, one of the few women in the Iron Circle. However, no amount of research or sorcery will reveal this information prior to entering the tomb. The DM should be sure not to speak Tzolo's name or reveal her gender until the PCs have discovered this information for themselves.

Preparation and Staging

Count on the tomb taking up more than a single night's gaming session, as navigation of its secret corridors and chambers will be time consuming. This is not an adventure for neophyte adventurers or DMs, and those unused to great risk and challenge may find themselves knocking over one another while hunting for the nearest exit. Carefully consider the makeup of your group before dumping their unknowing PCs into these hazardous crypts and chambers. The penalty for error in the tomb is often severe.

When running the tomb, it is important to remember a few basic game rules and techniques of DMing:

—Begin mapping in the center of a piece of graph paper, so as to give no clues to the place's configuration.

—If the PCs are *teleported*, do not indicate where the party has been transported. When the PCs figure out that they have been *teleported*, begin a new map at the center of another sheet of paper.

—Keep careful track of the position of PCs during all encounters so as not to stir up suspicion when a PC's location is essential to an encounter's outcome.

—Take some time to read over the information regarding illusions in the AD&D 2nd Edition *Player's Handbook*, pages 82-84.

—Saving throws for PCs should be made in secret by the DM, as several times players should not be aware a save is necessary. If your players object to this, have each PC make a dozen or more 1d20 rolls before the game begins and refer to these rolls whenever saving throws are required.

There are clues found at various points in the tomb. It may puzzle your players that Tzolo would leave hints lying about for would-be grave robbers. However, the clues were intended for her liberating servants. The minions of each mud sorcerer had in their possession precious documents known as the Scrolls of Liberation. These works detailed safe navigation of the various false tombs, to be used in concert with the seemingly cryptic clues when the time came to awaken their masters. However, the Paladins of Kospia burned these documents along with all other seized Jezulein literature during the Great Purge. When these scrolls went up in flames, so did the possibility of safely plundering these hidden crypts.

Standard Features

Unless otherwise indicated at individual encounter descriptions, the following information is true throughout the tomb. Rooms and corridors are made of tightly fitted white stone blocks, and ceilings are 12' high. The adventurers must provide illumination, as there are no natural light sources within. Doors are made of sturdy oak bound with iron, and once unlocked do not require successful open-doors rolls.

Undead cannot be destroyed by a priest turning them, as this is a center of evil power. A "T" result has no effect. Treat a "D" result as a "T" on Table 47: Turning Undead (AD&D 2nd Edition *Dungeon Master's Guide*, page 67). Once the priest is successful, he must maintain his turning activity in order to keep the undead at bay. Undead in the tomb will not be driven off but will keep 10' away from the turning priest, attempting to move around him and get to the rest of the party if possible.

There are several references in the text to items written in Taalese, an ancient language used by the Jezulein cult. Such inscriptions require a *comprehend languages* spell to decipher, though certain words may be recognized if previously encountered.

There are some beings within the

tomb who are still quite alive. Preserved by *temporal stasis* spells, these persons are released from their suspended state (unless otherwise indicated) when the granite block at area 1 is lowered. Also, all sorcery within the tomb has been cast at the 20th level of ability for the purposes of *dispel magic* and similar spells. Exceptions are noted at individual encounters.

Magic Use in the Tomb

Certain spells and magical items used to circumvent barriers (such as *teleport, passwall, phase door, rock to mud, dimension door, blink, stone shape,* etc.) will not function in the tomb to bypass walls, portals, sarcophagi, or other obstructions. If a caster attempts to use such a spell in this manner, a sixth sense informs him that the spell won't function. If he heeds this warning, the spell is not wasted.

However, these same spells function normally if they are not used to circumvent barriers. For example, a *teleport* spell can be used to move from one part of a chamber to another, or from one room to another if nothing (including closed doors or secret portals) would prevent normal locomotion between these places.

Many closed areas or compartments can be opened only through the use of specially ensorcelled items (shown in boldface in the text). No other means, with the exception of *wishes*, will bypass these obstacles. See the "Ensorcelled Items" sidebar for a list of these ensorcelled items, the locations where they may be found, and where they are to be used.

A *gem of seeing* has a 15% chance of shattering each time it is used within the tomb, blinding the scrying individual until healed. These effects are the result of powerful anti-magicks placed on the entire structure of the tomb.

Though earth- or water-based spells (*stone to flesh, rock to mud, stone tell, lower water, airy water, create water,* etc.) cast within the tomb (or devices duplicating such effects) will function normally in most instances, they also have a 50% chance of summoning a mud grue, a minion of evil earth and water elementals. The mud grue will seek to slay the spell-caster, ignoring all others and fighting to the death. Spells or devices that summon earth or water elementals are exceptions to this rule. Such spells and devices function normally, but the summoned elemental has a 5% cumulative chance per round of going berserk and attacking the summoner and his cohorts.

Mud grue: INT average; AL CE; AC 3; MV 12, swim 18, burrow 3; HD 7 +7; hp 36; THAC0 13; #AT 3; Dmg 1-4/1-4/3-12; SA on a natural 20 (for the 3-12 hp bite attack) the victim must save vs. petrification or drown; SD +1 or better weapon to hit, immune to earth- and water-based spells; MR 10%; SZ M; ML 20; XP 5,000; new monster. A mud grue looks like a mud-covered crocodile walking upright.

The use of divination magic within the tomb is a touchy matter. Powerful anti-magicks have been placed on the tomb to hinder attempts at divination, disturbing the functioning of some spells. Employment of *speak with dead* spells on any of the corpses within the tomb must be cast at the 21st level ability to even reach these spirits, as all have been dead some 650 years. But even if a spirit is reached, magical protections and the cringing fear of Tzolo that most tomb occupants carry even to the grave enable the spirits to resist. They only spout vile curses at the caster and speak some variation of the following in Taalese: "Augh! Why dost thou disturb my dark sleep? Thou dost tread upon ground which shall claim thy eternal soul, mortal! My mistress will destroy thee utterly!" Other divination-type spells affected are: *contact other plane* (30% chance the contact will be blocked by evil elemental forces); *legend lore* (yields no information); *vision* (rolls should be made at −5, making it more likely for a power to be annoyed or indifferent); *divination* (base for correct divination is 30% due to anti-magicks); and *commune* (elicits only "yes" or "no" answers). Divination spells not listed above function normally. However, you should reread the description of such spells to prevent giving too much information to would-be diviners.

Ensorcelled Items

Roll	Item	Found At	Used At
1.	black key	2C	4B
2.	inscribed stones (4)	7	34
3.	green key	8	9
4.	metal key	10C	10B
5.	copper key	14B	14C
6.	*talisman of the Uzriwy*	19	34
7.	red tusk	30D	29
8.	elephant statuette	34	35
9.	oval stone	35	1,17
10.	crystal orb	35	35

For the Player Characters

The party may learn of the tomb's existence by coming into possession of a map to the site, perhaps during an earlier adventure. Wise PCs will seek out a sage to gain a better understanding of this map. This sage may be able to tell the party that it is a map to the tomb of a mud sorcerer and direct them (for a fee) to another scholar in the city who has better information on the Jezulein cult.

This other sage should have expertise in history and theology, with a special interest in dead religious movements. He will not possess detailed knowledge of the Jezulein cult, though his learning will be greater than that of most scholars, and his services will be expensive. Research in his library (requiring as much as a month) can reveal the following valuable information:

—Mud sorcerers were the leaders of a long-dead religious cult, destroyed some 650 years ago.

—Mud sorcerers were extremely protective of their hiding places, and one can count on finding traps, tricks, and several false sepulchers before discovering the actual tomb. However, cryptic riddles have been found in other tombs, guiding adventurers with mixed success to their goal. Why such clues were left behind is a puzzle. Some sages believe that the Jezulein were so sure of the superiority of their intellects that the clues were their way of toying with would-be grave robbers.

—Four glyphs of power, known as the major mud sorcerer symbols (Kaia Jezulein Braeu Majorum) are found frequently in Jezulein tombs, though they are of varying significance from crypt to crypt. (The DM should give the PCs copies of the symbols shown in the sidebar.) The first symbol represents the Convergence of Earth and Water, the second is Earth Dominant, the third represents Water Dominant, and the fourth shows the Harmony of Earth and Water.

—Earth and water usually play significant roles in a mud sorcerer tomb, though spells dealing with such matter have been known to malfunction or produce dire

results in other tombs.

—Augury and divination-type spells will be most useful in such an endeavor, though powerful forces at times limit their effectiveness or disrupt them altogether.

—Members of the Jezulein cult spoke a dead language known as Taalese. Knowledge of this ancient tongue, or magic able to decipher unknown languages, will be a great asset.

—Poison gases and liquids have been found in abundance in other Jezulein tombs. Cures for such dangers are a wise precaution.

—The name of the Jezulein governing body was the Iron Circle. Members of the Iron Circle whose tombs have not yet been discovered are (in alphabetical order): Alyph, Aqui, Boukettu, Daedis Ko, Eyenne, Graptis, Irdraz, Iyayo, Jikyor, Lalotte, Markule, Nagjyat, Nala, Oiru, Oyallum, Piyyat, Szew, Tilyat, Timla Ji, Tzolo, Ulshidar, Uso, Visivius and Xialta.

The sage will also be able to provide most of the background information given in the introduction, though not the information concerning why the tombs were constructed. All the sage will know is that the Jezulein masters dropped suddenly and simultaneously out of sight.

The scholar will mention, quite offhandedly, that if any mud sorcerer books are found in the tomb, he might be willing to part with a few gold pieces to purchase them, simply to have as curiosities. Actually, he would be willing to pay their full value, though he will do his best to hide this fact and will squabble over the price if any such books are offered to him. An unscrupulous sage might even hire thugs to steal such precious tomes.

Due to the number of inscriptions in Taalese found within the tomb, you may wish to provide the PCs with some means other than a *comprehend languages* spell for translation. Perhaps the sage has a book of Taalese language and usage that will enable the PCs to translate inscriptions at a rate of one line per turn. The sage may offer this book on loan in return for all Jezulein tomes the party finds within the tomb, or an exorbitant fee. Whatever the price, it is in the PCs' best interest to have such a tool at their disposal.

Sage: AL LN; AC 10; MV 12; 0-level human; hp 3; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; S 8, D 13, C 10, I 17, W 15, Ch 11; ML 10.

The entrance to Tzolo's tomb lies in a hidden cavern that the DM may place wherever seems appropriate in the campaign world.

THE FOUR GREAT MUD SORCERER SYMBOLS

1st 2nd 3rd 4th

Encounter Areas in the Tomb

1. Granite Block Set in Cavern Wall. This dark gray block of granite (7′ × 4′ × 5′) is the obvious entrance to the tomb. It is etched with strange geometric designs and three words whose letters are made of platinum insets (the letters cannot be pried out of the stone). The words read: "Errukiz," "Ezdrubal," and "Elomcwe." Any dwarf or person familiar with things dwarven will recognize these as the Three Sins of Ruin in dwarven philosophy (Treachery, Sloth, and Foolishness). However, this is a diversion.

Close examination of the letters ELOMCWE reveal that they depress with a soft click. If these letters are pressed so as to spell "Welcome," the granite block sinks into the earth. The sound of a multitude wailing mournfully pours forth from the chamber beyond as soon as the block begins to lower. The doorway remains open for a full turn before the block returns to its original position (it cannot be propped open). Only possession of the smooth **oval stone** held by Tzolo's guardian (area 35) will enable the party to lower the block again. Like most other structures within the tomb, the block is protected by powerful anti-magicks so as to prevent passage by any other means.

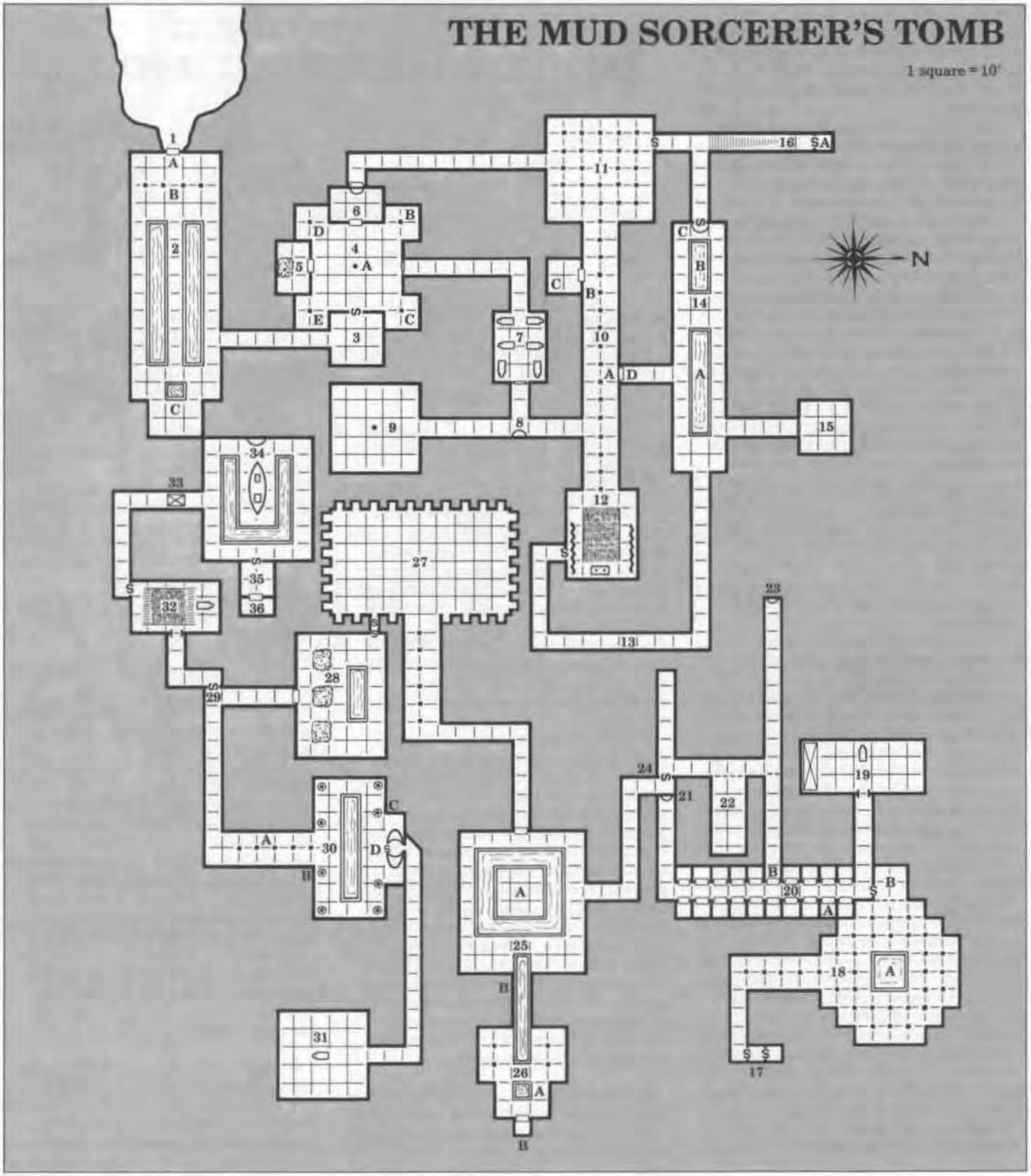
2. Entry Chamber. The ceiling of this long chamber lies 30′ above, and all the walls are made of a swirling dark-green marble. The east side of the granite block (A) bears the first mud sorcerer symbol, visible when the block returns to its closed position. The four pillars (B) at the west end of the chamber are made of black marble. Close examination at the 6′ mark on the west face of each pillar reveals one of the four mud sorcerer symbols (symbols one through four from north to south).

The long pools are 5′ deep and filled with fresh, crystal-clear water. A narrow (6″) black marble border surrounds each pool. The bottoms of these pools are littered with bleached human and demihuman bones. These are the remains of some of the laborers who assisted in the construction of the tomb; their current state is Tzolo's way of saying "thanks."

At the east end of this great chamber is a 10′-square pool (C) made of black marble and 30′ deep. Beyond the pool, a great black iron bell is suspended between two upright columns. Sounding the bell clearly (a hammer or the like will do the job) will cause the square pool to empty at the rate of 5′ every round. Striking the bell again causes the reverse to occur. A special **black key** (used on the pillar at area 4B) rests at the bottom of this pool, but only an individual standing at its bottom (or those with magical spells or items such as *eyes of minute seeing*) will notice it.

The wailing heard when the granite block sunk into the earth echoes through this chamber. The sound appears to be coming from the corridor that leads north.

3. Crying Eye Chamber. Those entering this room are greeted by a bizarre, disturbing sight: The walls of this chamber are covered with eyes of all shapes, sizes, and descriptions, blinking and squinting, tears pouring forth in


THE MUD SORCERER'S TOMB
1 square = 10'
N

anguished rivulets. A narrow stone gutter runs along the walls, catching the tears and drawing them to small holes in the four corners of the room. This is also the obvious source of the wailing sounds, as the mournful cries are nearly overwhelming here.

Though this room appears to be a dead end, it is likely that the party will conclude that a secret door is hidden here. However, the tears of the eyes are actually a corrosive acid that causes 1-8 hp damage when the surface of a wall is touched (treat as black pudding saliva when in contact with metal). If the PCs attempt to gouge out an eye, the flow of acid from that particular organ stops for a brief time (less than one round) before the eye regenerates and continues its corrosive weeping.

The only way to safely inspect for secret doors is through a clever use of magic. The following spells will prove somewhat effective: *gaze reflection* (closes the eyes on a single wall for three rounds, thus shutting off the flow of tears); *light, sleep, part water, lower water,* or *eyebite* (closes all the eyes on a single wall for the duration of the spell); *command* (use of an appropriate word such as "sleep," "close," etc. closes all eyes for a single round of inspection); *blindness* or *continual light* (closes all the eyes on a single wall permanently); and *neutralize poison* or *purify water* (permanently turns the flow of a single wall into harmless water).

4. Chamber of Alcoves. As soon as all PCs have passed through the secret door, it slams shut (unless the party somehow blocks it), and the sounds of wailing cease. The walls of this chamber are painted with fading geometric designs of red, gold, and green, and the ceiling is 22' above. Four strange statues and a pillar are all visible upon entry. The gate covering the north exit is locked and set with a poison needle trap (save vs. poison or be paralyzed for 2-5 turns).

This chamber was used for ceremonial purposes, and the statues in the alcoves (A, C, D, and E) represent various characters in the strange Jezulein mythos.

A: This central statue is made of green basalt. It depicts an elephant-headed human (9' tall) pointing an accusing finger at the secret door. Its other hand reaches for the hilt of its sheathed sword. The statue is bare chested, heavily muscled, and wears baggy pantaloons and sandals. It sits on a 1' high circular base and can be turned with a combined strength of 30. None of the portals in this chamber can be opened (even after being unlocked) unless the finger of this statue is pointing at it.

B: The southeast face of this black pillar bears all four mud sorcerer symbols, forming a diamond. Three feet up the northwest face of the pillar, a small keyhole can be discovered by careful inspection. Attempts to pick this lock result in a numbing shock that inflicts only 1-4 hp damage but gives the thief a −20% penalty when engaging in delicate activity (including opening locks, finding and removing traps and picking pockets) for the next 2-5 turns. The **black key** from the pool in area 2C fits this hole. If the key is turned 360° to the right, items from statues C and E can be taken, and statue D animates and attacks.

C: This is a 6' tall bronze statue of a mole-headed human gripping a real wooden-handled shovel in both hands. The statue is green with age, and close inspection of the hands will reveal seams and hinges on the fingers. The only means of taking the shovel is by using the black key in pillar B, which will loosen the fingers. The statue sits on an octagonal base that turns (if pushed with a combined strength of 20), but without any purpose. The mole-man's jaw is also hinged and can be pried open by a PC with a strength of 15 or greater. Within its mouth is a sealed bone tube containing a piece of aged vellum with the following written in Taalese:

Dancing on the first great sign
Calls lying blades for cuts unkind.
The dancer finds another room
And suffers here a watery doom.

This is a clue referring to the mosaic symbol trap at area 15.

D: This 6'-tall bronze statue (also green with age) is of a tiger-headed human wearing ornate armor and wielding a jagged-toothed long sword in one of its clawed hands. The statue radiates a faint dweomer, and turning the black key in pillar B animates the tiger-man, which attacks immediately. The creature returns to its inanimate state when it reaches 0 hp. Its sword and armor cannot be retrieved as they are physically a part of the statue.

Tiger-headed statue: INT high; AL CE; AC −3; MV 14; HD 11; hp 75; THAC0 9; #AT 3; Dmg 2-5 (claw)/by weapon type (see SA)/1-10 (bite); SA wielding a long sword *nine lives stealer +2* (five charges remaining); SD +1 or better weapon to hit; immune to *charm, sleep,* or *hold* spells; immune to damage from fire; half or no damage from cold or electrical attacks; regenerates 1 hp per round; a *heat metal* spell cast on the beast does it no harm but adds +2 to the damage the statue inflicts with each successful attack for the duration of the spell; MR 15%; SZ M; ML 20; XP 9,000. A *transmute metal to wood* spell changes the statue's armor class to 0, but its armor and weapon are unaffected.

E: This 5' tall statue of green, aged bronze depicts a fly-headed human crouched for attack. It wears *plate mail of vulnerability −4* and wields a real dirk and short sword (normal, though both radiate magic as a result of a *Nystul's magic aura* spell). Seams and hinges can be seen where the fingers meet the backs of the hands, suggesting that they might be opened. The statue sits on a square base that turns counter-clockwise (combined strength of 26 needed). The base is screwed into the stone floor, and if fully turned four times it can be lifted off (combined strength of 30), exposing a cylindrical cavity 1' deep. Doing so, however, releases a *stinking cloud.* The little niche holds 15 100-gp gems (seven pieces of amber, five tourmalines, three pieces of coral); two 500-gp gems (peridot and topaz); a platinum statuette resembling statue D (75 pp value); a potion of *extra-healing;* an *elixir of madness;* and a scroll of *protection from golems* (functions as does a scroll of *protection from elementals* except that protection is against no more than 30 HD of golems of any type) rolled up and tied with a dark blue ribbon. The statue cannot be turned nor the items removed if the black key has not been turned in pillar B.

5. Dirt Plot. The dirt plot in this otherwise bare room holds a wooden coffin, buried 7' below the surface. Inside is the rotting corpse of one of Tzolo's minor servants, dressed in once-fine clothing, now nothing more than moldering rags. Careful examination of the corpse's neck reveals signs of strangulation.

One mummified hand clutches a sealed metal scroll tube within which is a brittle scroll. Written in a shaky hand is the following, in the Taalese tongue: "I delight in the service of my mistress. It is for her I live or die, whatever her choos-

ing. May the gods of Earth and Water bless her every endeavor." This touching testimony was written by the servant just moments before Tzolo had him garroted. This seemingly worthless tidbit is actually valuable information. It provides the party with Tzolo's gender.

The corpse wears a gold ring set with a small topaz on its right hand (225 gp value) and grips a silver piece in its teeth.

6. Great Stone Face. On the west wall of this room, the first of several stone faces is found. Its convex surface protrudes from the wall. The huge face has heavy, blind eyes, thick, pendulous lips, large ears, a great bulbous nose, and a pair of dull fangs. It is roughly circular, 6′ in diameter. Cool currents of air can be felt coming from its nostrils by those inspecting it closely (suggesting an opening beyond).

The face is the back of a one-way door that opens only from the other side. However, someone who quaffs a full potion of *diminution* or uses a *reduce* spell should be small enough to pass through the stone face's nostrils to the other side.

7. Mummy Crypt. A total of six stone sarcophagi lie in this chamber, four of normal size and two larger ones. All coffin lids are sealed with mortar (which must be chiseled out) and require a combined strength of 30 (40 for the larger sarcophagi) to remove.

The four smaller coffins contain the remains of Jezulein priests who wear rotting red robes, begemmed phylacteries made of gold (1,200 gp each), gold earrings set with tiny sapphires (200 gp for each pair), and simple gold rings etched with various mud sorcerer symbols (40 gp each). Each also holds a bronze mace, green with age. Clenched in the teeth of each corpse is a semiprecious **inscribed stone** (a bloodstone, a carnelian, a citrine, and an onyx), each bearing one of the four mud sorcerer symbols. These inscribed stones radiate magic and are the keys necessary to enter the true crypt (area 35).

The two larger sarcophagi contain hill giant mummies wrapped in filthy strips of linen. Each grips a massive gem at his breast (though they are only cut glass, these gems appear to be worth at least 10,000 gp). If the gems are molested in any way, the mummies animate and attack, fighting until destroyed. Scrawled in Taalese on the linens wrapped around the northern mummy's chest is a clue:

> Colored stones to thee bequeathed,
> Bitten tight in priestly teeth.
> Each a key to Tzolo's Wall,
> Sign to sign will make it fall.

This clue gives guidance on the use of the inscribed stones on the secret door in area 34.

The gate covering this room's eastward exit has dozens of curving daggers welded to its bars, facing out of the room. The gate is locked and cannot be propped open by any means.

Hill giant mummies (2): INT low; AL CE; AC 1; MV 13; HD 10+1; hp 65, 58; THAC0 11; #AT 1; Dmg 2d8+2; SA rotting disease touch, fear; SD cannot be turned in this chamber, otherwise turned as vampires; +1 or better weapon to hit (sustaining only half normal damage); immune to poison, paralysis, *sleep, charm, hold* and cold-based magic; SZ L; ML 20; XP 8,000 each; MC1 (Mummy; modified).

8. Stone Face. The appearance of this stone face is similar to the one found at area 6, but its eyes look south and its lips are pursed as if whistling. In fact, a slight current of air issues from the mouth. Beneath the face, the word "il-yatak" is inscribed ("listen" in Taalese). An individual with a slender hand may reach into the right ear cavity and find a small key made of green basalt. This **green key** fits into the pillar at area 9 to the south.

Reaching into the left ear causes a powerful blast of wind to erupt from the mouth, slamming anyone standing directly in front of it into the dagger gate at area 7, inflicting massive damage (8d6 hp) as they are impaled. This grisly end can be avoided if the victim makes a successful dexterity check at −3 on 1d20. If two or more persons of equal or greater mass stand between the victim and the barbed gate, all are slammed back into the corridor wall, bruised but otherwise unhurt.

9. Hidden Coffin. A lonely pillar of green basalt stands in the center of this chamber, whose ceiling is 15′ above. The pillar is huge, 6′ in diameter. Close inspection of the column's south side reveals a keyhole at its base. A thief attempting to pick this lock or find/remove traps will receive 2-24 hp electrical damage.

The **green key** from the stone face's ear at area 8 fits easily into the hole. If the key is turned to the right, nothing happens. If it is turned 360° or more to the left, the PCs hear a loud "click." The DM should immediately begin counting silently. On the count of 10, a blast from within the pillar creates an oval opening in its south face 6′ tall and 3′ wide. Those standing to the south within 20′ of the pillar sustain 3-12 hp damage from hunks of stone propelled by the explosion.

A coffin made of purple wood sits upright in the pillar cavity and can be removed by a few PCs working together. The coffin lid is only an inch thick, secured by dozens of nails. It is painted to depict a beautiful woman with flowing black hair, hands crossed over her chest, eyes closed as if in a deep dream, a silver pendant bearing the first mud sorcerer symbol around her delicate neck.

The corpse within, however, is that of a male half-elf, a horrid, mummified grimace of pain on his face. Careful examination of the neck reveals that the individual, once one of Tzolo's architects, was garroted. Having disappointed his mistress with his work, his life

and employment were thus terminated. The corpse wears a silver pendant around his neck identical to the one painted on the lid, except that there is no mud sorcerer symbol on it. The pendant radiates magic, acting as a *necklace of strangulation*, and is hidden by rotting robes of faded red and blue.

A metal scroll tube in the cadaver's left hand contains a brittle piece of papyrus bearing the following inscription in Taalese:

To sail the ship that is smiled upon,
The silver necklace must be donned.

This is a clue referring to the mudship in area 34. However, the necklace around the dead architect's neck is not the one mentioned in this message.

Anyone who enters the pillar cavity after the coffin is removed can spy a woven cord of human hair attached to the cavity ceiling. If the cord is pulled, a dull "click" sounds and, after an actual count to 10, the core of the pillar above comes crashing down on this unfortunate individual's head, squashing him to a lifeless pulp. However, a successful dexterity check at −2 indicates the PC was able to throw himself out of the cavity just in the nick of time.

10. Long Pillared Hall. The ceiling in this wide corridor is 20' high, and the thick pillars are made of black marble. There is a one-way door at A, opened only from area 14D to the north. A fanged camel's head is painted on the door's southern face. A dark suit of field plate armor holding a halberd stands against the wall at B. Closer inspection reveals strange gears at the armor's joints, and peculiar geometric designs etched into its metallic surface.

This armored suit is actually a machine designed by an alchemist-inventor in debt to Tzolo (apparently this gift did not curry any special favor, as his corpse is among those at area 27). The door adjacent to the automaton is *wizard locked*. The room small room beyond (C) contains a metal chest that is triple locked. It holds eight vials of oil, a number of odd-looking metal tools, and a thick book entitled *Codissus il Yurushyui Ittemmet (Manual of Yurushyu's Automaton)*.

Hidden in the back cover of the book is a **metal key.** If the key is inserted into the keyhole at the base of the automaton's neck and turned at least one full rotation counterclockwise, the automaton attacks the party until it is destroyed. If the key is turned a full rotation clockwise, the automaton begins to shake violently. The DM should begin to count silently. On the count of 10 the machine explodes, causing 4d10 hp damage to all within a 30' radius.

Despite the manual (a poorly written tome with much crucial information missing), the automaton cannot be repaired. If the PCs pry open the automaton's chest after it is destroyed in battle, they can find a 5,000-gp diamond. The gem will be too hot to handle for a full turn if the automaton was activated. If the machine explodes, the gem is obliterated.

Automaton: INT non; AL N; AC 2; MV 10; HD 8; hp 62; THAC0 13; #AT 3/2; Dmg by weapon type; SD immune to mind- and metal-affecting spells; MR 20%; SZ M; ML 20; XP 2,000.

11. Ctenixil's Lair. The black pillars in this dark chamber are fashioned to look as though huge snakes are coiled along their lengths, though the heads of the carvings are those of various animals, humans, and demihumans. A huge spirit naga is actually coiled around the center pillar. Ctenixil, once an ally of Tzolo, now serves as an unwilling guardian in her tomb, released from *temporal stasis* when the great block at the entrance (area 1) was lowered. He waits until the party has gone past his pillar before attacking. He cannot leave this chamber and is open to discussion if the battle goes badly for him. Ctenixil knows nothing about the rest of the tomb, though he may pretend to have great knowledge, fabricating information to save his skin.

Ctenixil, spirit naga: INT high; AL CE; AC 4; MV 12; HD 10; hp 64; THAC0 11; #AT 1; Dmg 1-3; SA poison, *charm* gaze, spell use; SZ H; ML 14; XP 5,000; MC2. Wizard spells: *burning hands, chill touch, protection from good, wall of fog; mirror image, web; vampiric touch.* Priest spells: *command, cure light wounds* (×2); *hold person, silence 15' radius.*

12. Ceremonial Chamber. This chamber was used for some of the weird rituals conducted by the mud sorcerers and lesser devotees of their foul creed. The ceiling, 18' above, is painted with swirling patterns of churning water in which alien creatures struggle in the chaotic whirl. The once-bright paint on the walls is now a faded red, and various items (some best left untouched) can be found within the room.

Rug: This expertly crafted rug depicts a scene similar to the one on the ceiling, but the struggling figures are obviously human and demihuman. The rug radiates a strong dweomer, and any PC who touches the rug in any way will vanish. Close examination of the rug at the point of contact, however, reveals that the PC has become a part of the woven scene, a tiny figure depicted struggling in the mighty flood. The PC will actually drown in one turn and become a permanent (albeit lifeless) part of the rug's disturbing spectacle if not released by magical means.

Any of the following spells, applied to the individual, will prove effective (the caster need not fear becoming absorbed by the rug when engaged in this activity, as the magical energy acts as a buffer between the caster and the rug): *levitate, fly, gust of wind, fabricate, passwall, teleport, Bigby's forceful hand, lower water, part water, transmute water* to dust, Bigby's grasping hand, limited wish, phase door, reverse gravity, teleport without error, wish, water walk. The DM should adjudicate the effectiveness of

spells not listed above.

Braziers: The brass braziers in the northwest and southwest corners are shallow dishes about 2′ in diameter on 6′ high stands. They radiate a faint magic, and red-hot coals burn in both. If a brazier is touched, a single coal launches itself at the offending PC, resulting in 1-4 hp damage. Also, flammable items, such as cloaks and hair, could be set aflame.

Tapestries: The large 32′ × 17′ tapestry on the north wall depicts several animal-headed humans staring blankly out into the chamber as if in a trance. If touched, the tapestry falls from the wall and acts as a *rug of smothering*, though it loses these properties if it is removed from this room. The south tapestry is the same size and depicts a banquet scene in which animal-headed beings fight one another for scraps of food. The tapestry covers a secret door, which must still be detected by normal means after the covering is removed.

Candles: Tall brass candelabra flank the triangular altar. Each holds three candles; all are black except the southernmost one which is red. If the red candle is lit, the pinkish smoke it emits wafts over to the south wall and outlines the location of the secret door. The other candles give off a sickly sweet odor if lit but are otherwise harmless.

Altar: Made of solid, deep-red marble, this triangular altar has dozens of the mud sorcerer symbols etched into its surfaces. Those who touch the altar itself (not the items atop it) without first speaking the Taalese word for mud ("mairu") sustain 2-5 hp cold damage with every contact. Several items of unknown purpose sit atop this altar:

—A locked ebony box (poison needle trap, save or lose 1-4 strength points for 8-11 turns; *fire trapped*, 1d4 + 20 hp damage) holds a red silk pillow, upon which sits a tiny coiled snake with green and blue bands. This small serpent speaks to the party, telling the PCs that it will answer three of their questions for releasing it from its prison (treat as an *augury*, though the third answer will be false). However, the tiny snake's voice is very faint, and a person must lean in closely to hear it. After answering the third question, the snake strikes the listener (THAC0 11). If hit, the victim must save vs. wands at −2 or be put to sleep for a full year (*wish* required to dispel). The snake then vanishes in a puff of smoke, as it will prior to this occurrence if the PCs strike out at it. Inside the pillow is a *mud ring* (see sidebar).

—An obsidian dagger (worth 15 gp).

—A small piece of torn green silk.

—Four octagonal disks (4″ in diameter) of gray marble, each bearing a mud sorcerer symbol.

13. Painted Mural Corridor. A faded mural covers the entire length of the east wall of this corridor. It depicts four animal-headed humans (bull-, camel-, cat- and mole-headed) holding a long green banner. The banner bears a message, written in Taalese:

Pig or camel brings thee woe
Hippo clears the way to go.

This is a clue to the golems at area 28.

14. Two Pools and Stone Face. The ceiling of this chamber lies 20′ above, and veins of black run through the white stone. The long pool (A) is 3′ deep, and the water is crystal clear. About five dozen rainbow-colored fish swim in its depths. Anyone examining the fish should make an intelligence check on 1d20. PCs who fail their rolls notice something odd and interesting about the way the fish are swimming. Each individual who then looks into the pool for a full round (including those who made their intelligence checks earlier), are affected by a *chaos* spell (20th-level caster). While the PCs examine the residents of the pool, the DM should describe the fishes' curious, meandering swimming pattern.

The short pool (B) is 2½′ deep, and its bottom is littered with various coins (18 pp, 26 gp, 73 ep, 105 sp, 161 cp). Only after all these coins are removed from the pool will the PCs find a small **copper key** that is the only means of opening the stone face (C) on the west wall.

This stone face (C) grimaces with fear: eyes wide, nostrils flared, lips taut across fangs in the beginnings of a scream. An individual who reaches inside the right nostril can feel a metal keyhole. The **copper key** from the short pool must be turned twice to the right to unlatch the stone face. A successful open-doors roll is then necessary to open the portal due to its great weight.

The one-way door (D) that bears the image of a cross-eyed, snake-headed human bearing a great battle axe is locked and opens inward.

15. Mosaic Symbol. The gate to this chamber is made of a strange bluish alloy and secured by a simple lock (+15% to lock-picking ability). The floor of the chamber is a huge mosaic of the first mud sorcerer symbol, made of small bits of black obsidian and white quartz. Stepping on any portion of the obsidian symbol sets into motion a powerful programmed illusion. Onlookers see the PC who stepped on the symbol hacked to bits by dozens of shining, whirling blades that appear out of nowhere. At the end of this grisly spectacle, the corpse and blades vanish.

The PC has been *teleported* to area

Mud Ring

This magical ring appears to be made of dark-red clay. Its wearer may cast several potent earth- and water-based spells.

Priest spells (14th level of ability): *meld into stone* and *water breathing* (three times per day); *stone shape* (twice per day); *earthquake* (once per month, after which the ring's powers go dormant for two days).

Wizard spells (12th level of ability): *transmute rock to mud* or reverse (twice per week); *transmute water to dust* or reverse (once per week); *conjure elemental* (earth or water, 8 HD, once per week); *airy water* (once per day).

No more than five functions may be used in a single day. While wearing the ring, all saves involving earth or water are made at +1, and attacks by beings from the planes of elemental Earth or Water are made at −1, with damage at −1 on the die.

However, the ring bears some danger. Saving throws vs. all air (including poison gases and breath weapons) and fire attacks are made at −1, and damage is always at +1 on the die. There is also a 2% chance each time the ring is used that the wearer will be *plane shifted* to the plane of elemental Earth or Water (50% chance of either) and trapped by a powerful denizen of that place.

Mages, priests, and rogues may use the ring, but thieves using it have an 8% chance of *plane shifting* per usage. An individual donning the ring will be made aware of its powers telepathically, though its limits and dangers will be discovered only through employing the device.

18A, facing east. This will occur as many times as the symbol is tread upon, though sorcerous inquiry may reveal that affected PCs are not really dead.

16. Descending Stairway and Secret Chamber. The stairs in this cold, dusty corridor descend 40'. Twenty feet beyond the last step, the hall seems to end at a blank wall. On the vertical face of the final step, the words "North, then South," are etched in Taalese. This cryptic clue instructs the party to use the secret door to the north and then, after being *teleported* to area 17, move through the secret door to the south. The secret door here is of especially clever design, detected on a 1-in-8 chance (2-in-8 by an elf). The door cannot be kept open once it has been passed, though it can easily be reopened.

The 10' × 10' room (A) beyond the door is decorated with hundreds of intricate glyphs and sigils painted on its surfaces. A particularly large mud sorcerer symbol (#4) dominates the center of the north wall. If this wall is touched after the secret door has closed, everyone within the room is *teleported* to area 17.

17. Trick Chamber. This room is identical to area 16A, so *teleported* PCs should believe they are still in the previous chamber and nothing unusual has occurred. If the secret door to the north is discovered and pushed (normal chance of secret-door detection), the DM should begin counting slowly to himself.

On the count of 10, the north wall sinks into the ground with incredible speed, and a *blade barrier* (a vertical disk, 7' wide, 9' tall) moves southward from the 10'-square room to the north. The *blade barrier* inflicts 8d8 hp damage to all those in its path. Anyone who makes a successful dexterity check on 1d20 at −1 takes only half damage. PCs surviving the initial pass of the blades have time to flatten themselves against the east or west wall. After a single round, the barrier begins to move north and south, between the two chambers, requiring one round to move through both rooms.

The barrier exists for 45 rounds (it is cast at 15th level ability), moving back and forth 22 times until it returns to the northern chamber and the wall between the rooms closes again. The *blade barrier* can be magically destroyed before its normal termination (a *disintegrate* spell or the like will do the job, as will a successful *dispel magic* spell).

The secret door to the south is identical to the one found at area 16, so though it must be reopened, it need not be searched for anew.

Note: If the party is so foolish as to reopen the secret door to the north, the whole affair begins again.

18. Pillar and Pool Chamber. This chamber's ceiling is 25' above and is supported by a great number of cleverly carved gray marble pillars decorated with intertwining thorny roses, snakes, and delicately clawed hands making strange signs. A 20' × 20' pool of murky water at the chamber's center is 35' deep, but this depth cannot be discerned from the surface. An illusory wall hides a secret room (B) to the west of the main chamber.

A: This is the point at which all those *teleported* from the mosaic symbol chamber (area 15) arrive, facing east. The resident of the secret room is immediately aware of the arrival of victims and tries to kill those so transported.

B: Ulzaada the annis lives in this chamber. Once a servant of Tzolo, she was condemned to live in the tomb, never growing old, for failing her mistress in some long-forgotten task. Ulzaada will use her wand (see below) to knock an individual into the pool. Anyone wearing heavy armor will sink; otherwise it requires a full round to climb out of the pool while the annis advances for close-quarters combat (if the person is alone) or reuses the wand mercilessly.

If her hiding place is discovered and the battle goes badly for her, Ulzaada uses her *fog cloud* ability to escape through the secret door, hiding in one of the cells to the south (area 20A).

A filthy pallet and a few dirty rags are all that can be found in this chamber, along with a burlap sack filled with food only an annis would find appetizing.

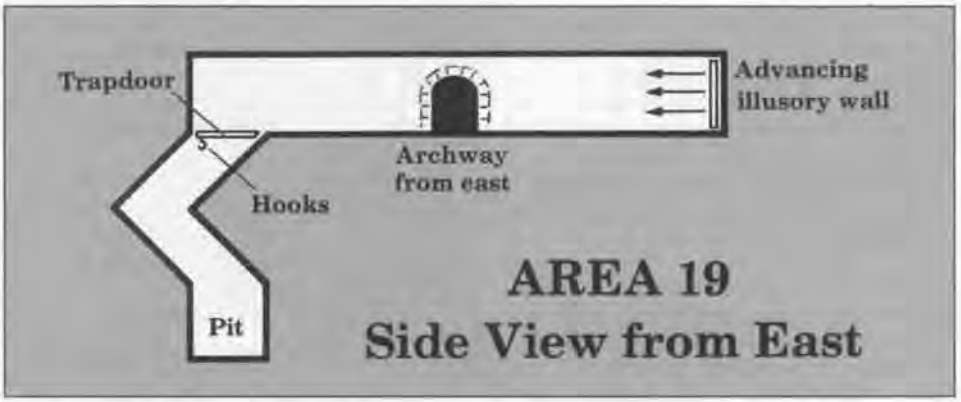
If captured alive, Ulzaada may be coerced into revealing the fact that Tzolo was a woman and that the mud sorcerer supervised the construction of the tomb herself, believing it to be a hiding place before her "glorious return to power." Ulzaada will also reveal the location of the secret door in her lair and admit that she never witnessed Tzolo's death, but only if this question is asked. She knows the configuration of the tomb from area 17 through area 27 but will reveal only general tidbits of information about the

layout (such as "There is a huge mausoleum to the southwest" (area 27), and "A low waterway leads to a burial crypt" (areas 25 and 26).

Ulzaada's encounter with the party will finally shatter what remains of her dubious sanity, and she will titter madly that the PCs are doomed to fail and that Tzolo will destroy them hideously in the end. At this point she will be reduced to a giggling, paranoid wreck and will refuse to accompany the party to serve as guide even at pain of death. She does possess a huge ring of brass keys to the cells at area 20 (each key fitting a single lock; roll 1d20 to determine what lock a key fits).

Ulzaada, annis: INT very; AL CE; AC 0; MV 15; HD 7+7; hp 50; THAC0 13; #AT 3; Dmg 1d8+8/1d8+8/2d4+1; SA grappling, 19 strength; SD *change self, fog cloud,* edged weapons do −1 hp damage (blunt weapons +1); SZ L; ML 15; XP 7,000; MC2 (Hag); *wand of lightning* (12 charges).

19. False Crypt. On the north wall of this large chamber, the words "Let the chips fall where they may" are sloppily scrawled in Taalese. A large oak sar-



cophagus sits on a stone block flanked by two suits of exquisitely fashioned field plate armor holding outlandish pole arms. Odd curling horns, hooks, and other strange fixtures adorn these suits, each splendid to look at but not very functional. The pole arms are mainly for show, and a fighter will quickly realize that they are poorly balanced (−3 to hit when used).

Three scrolls are hidden in the hollow butt of the odd halberd in the grasp of the northern suit of armor. One is a scroll of *airy water*, the second is a scroll with *water breathing* and *raise dead*, and the third has a clue in Taalese:

Those who cower to the south
Fall into a hungry mouth.

This is a reference to the illusion trap in this room (described later).

Dizzying sigils are carved into the coffin's lid, which is inlaid with silver letters (worth 40 gp total if pried out) that state "Disturb not the slumber of Tzolo" in Taalese. Three iron padlocks secure the coffin cover on the left side; black iron hinges are found on the right. The second padlock has a poison needle trap (save at −1 or fall into a comatose slumber for 2-5 turns). If they cannot be picked, these padlocks can all be smashed open with a few blows from a hammer or the like.

The hinges creak dramatically when the coffin lid is opened to reveal a mummified corpse clad in only a bright blue loincloth. This person (his name was Huadi, once one of Tzolo's elite bodyguards) was obviously male, though a luxurious mane of gray hair fills much of the coffin. A talisman of ebony and ivory (bearing the second mud sorcerer symbol on one side and the third symbol on the other) rests around Huadi's neck on a delicate silver chain. A gruesome grin is frozen on the corpse's face, and two ancient gold coins (worth 50 gp each to a collector of antiquated coinage) rest on his closed eyelids.

Huadi's dry, lifeless shell hides a compartment beneath that contains a potion of *undead control* (vampire), a potion of *hill giant strength*, a 1,000-gp fire opal, and a silver filigreed walnut box worth 850 gp. The box is locked but empty.

The silver necklace hanging about the corpse's neck is the item referred to in the clue found at area 9. It is the ***talisman of the Uzrivoy*** (the mudship at area 34) and radiates a powerful dweomer. If the necklace is touched by one of the PCs, a complex programmed illusion is set into motion. The corpse's left hand appears to shoot up with amazing speed to grab hold of the PC's wrist. The thing sits up and the coins fall away its eyes, revealing empty black sockets, as it begins a horrid, cackling laughter. At this moment, the north wall rumbles and begins advancing southward at a rate of 10′ per round (or so it appears). A real iron gate drops down to block the archway. The mechanism that holds it in place gives a −30% penalty to anyone trying to lift it (though two PCs may combine their probabilities and try together). PCs voicing disbelief can make their saves at this time, though the person held in the corpse's iron grip gains no such save. Attacks on the corpse and attempts to sever its arm will prove totally fruitless, the PCs' weapons bouncing off the dark flesh as though it were made of iron.

When the north wall is only a few inches from the sarcophagus, the stone block appears to sink into the floor and the corpse's fingers snap off, freeing the person in its grasp. The advancing wall then appears to push the wooden coffin noisily across the floor toward the south wall.

The obvious goal of this elaborate illusion is to trick the party into the pit that occupies the entire south 10′ of this chamber. The lid of the pit is hinged on its north side and will open as soon as 350 lbs. or more are placed on it. The pit drops at a 45° angle south, then another 10′ at a 45° angle north, and then straight down another 10′ (see the diagram above). Those falling to the bottom incur 3d4 hp damage plus another 2d4 + 1 hp damage from shards of glass, bone, and metal set into the angled walls.

Two human corpses lie in the pit. One wears rotting leather armor, a *shield +1*, and a *short sword +1*. The other wears a moldering gray robe over *splint mail +1*. A 5½′-long staff with a *continual light* spell cast at one end, a spiked polearm, and a leather pouch containing 22 gp and a 100-gp tourmaline lie beneath the two bodies. These grave robbers have been dead more than 500 years.

A thief attempting to climb the angled portion of the walls does so at a −15% penalty and will take 1-4 hp damage for every 10′ traversed due to the sharp debris set in the stone. The lid of the pit closes after three rounds and can be reopened from the inside only if 350 lbs. or more are suspended from the two iron hooks affixed to the south side of the lid.

If the PCs make it back up to the false crypt, they will discover everything as they originally found it, and attempts to lift the iron gate in the archway are made without penalty. The talisman can be taken at this time without fear of further illusory tricks.

20. Corridor of Cells. The doors along this hallway are 6′ high, 2½′ wide, and made of sturdy oak bound with iron. Each door is fitted with an 8″-square window (5′ above the ground) filled with three vertical iron bars. The doors are all locked, and the tight fit requires a successful open-doors roll. The dank 10′ × 10′ rooms are strewn with rotting straw. A wooden stool and two buckets (both empty), along with a chipped wooden bowl and spoon are the only items that can be discovered in the cells. The skeletal remains of each cells' single occupant are manacled to the wall opposite the door by a single chain 8′ long. These area the skeletons of various servants who somehow failed Tzolo (who seems to have been a rather severe disciplinarian).

A: This is the cell to which Ulzaada the annis (from area 18B) will flee if things go badly for her. If she fled an earlier encounter, she is pressed against the west wall next to the door so that she cannot be spotted through the small window in the portal. Ulzaada has used her *change self* ability to assume the form of a plain (though large) young girl who claims to be a prisoner of Tzolo. She will not fight unless she is forced to do so.

B: At first glance, this dark cell looks like all the others, and the party will most likely pass it by. However, a less cursory examination will reveal that there is no wall opposite the door, and in fact a corridor moves off to the west. A *wall of force* covers the corridor 60' west of the cell door. If the wall is destroyed, it reforms in two rounds but is only 8' high.

21. Squinting Stone Face. Yet another stone face, 6' in diameter, covers the wall at the end of this corridor. The face squints in obvious pain: sharp teeth gritted, eyes shut, hair in messy disarray. Close examination of the left eye reveals that one of the eyelashes is actually a metal latch. If unlatched, the lid of this eye can be opened, revealing a small peephole. A PC who peers through the hole can see the outline of a 3' × 3' portal (the back side of the secret door at area 24) on the wall 10' to the west.

The stone face's jaw is hinged and can be pushed open with a combined strength of 34. A probing hand will find a small lever deep in the opening. If the lever is pulled, the jaw snaps shut, biting off the unfortunate individual's hand unless he makes a successful dexterity roll (on 1d20) with a −4 penalty. If a hand is lost, the use of some thieving skills (picking locks, climbing walls, finding/removing traps) or tasks requiring both hands are impossible, and all other manual activities are executed with a penalty of −5 to −25% (due to pain and discomfort).

This stone face is *not* a door to the corridor to the west.

22. Sea Chamber. This 20' wide by 10' high wall appears to be made of a thick, murky green glass. Nothing can be viewed beyond it. Attempting to hear noise likewise betrays nothing, though a bare hand to the surface will feel slight vibrations and a distinct coolness. One good hit with a blunt weapon will produce a spider web of cracks. A second blow will shatter the substance, and thousands of gallons of water will come gushing forth.

Everyone standing in front of the wall when it shatters is slammed against the opposite wall for 1-6 hp damage and an additional 1-4 hp damage from shards of the shattered wall. All those in the hall are swept either to the north or to the south (equal chance), and each person has a 30% chance of drowning (check only once) unless he or she has the ability to breathe water.

In a single round, the sea chamber empties completely and a *wall of iron* replaces the shattered one. The entire hall area from the stone face (area 23), to the wall 60' west of the secret door (area 24) stands 5' deep in salt water that cannot be returned to the sea chamber. If the PCs manage to circumvent the *wall of iron,* they find nothing but a damp, empty chamber.

23. Stone Face Drain. This stone face appears to be holding its breath: the eyes bulge, the nostrils seem pinched closed by an invisible hand, the lips are closed tight, and the cheeks puff out. Stone hair is matted to the forehead as if wet. Close examination reveals that the jaw is hinged, and a combined strength of 32 can force the jaw downward.

Pushing down on the jaw exposes a stone plug, 1' in diameter and set with an iron ring. Only an individual with 16 strength or greater will be able to remove this tapering 2'-long plug to reveal an iron grate at the end of the cylindrical opening. If water from the sea chamber (area 22) fills the corridor, it will drain through this opening. Four turns later, only 7" of water will remain in the corridor.

24. Secret Door. This secret portal is 8" off the floor and only 3' square. It is especially difficult to locate and open (1 in 8 chance, 2 in 8 for an elf) unless its location was previously viewed through the peephole at area 21 (in which case chances of finding it are 1 in 4; the PCs must make this connection on their own to gain this advantage). If water touches any portion of this door, it cannot be opened, though its presence and opening mechanism may be detected. Water must be drained from the hall or away from the door via the stone face (area 23) or sorcery (*lower water, part water, wall of force,* etc.).

25. Mummified Corpse and Waterway. The surfaces of this chamber are made of the same dark green marble found in the entry chamber (area 2). The ceiling is 25' above, and a 10' deep pool acts as a moat around the central island. The water is icy cold. At the center of the 30'-square area (A) is a body wrapped in white linen strips. Attempts to cross the pool to the center result in an attack by four water weirds. These creatures look as though they are made of the swirling dark green marble (a trick of the light) and this may throw the party off as to their true nature. If destroyed without the use of a *purify water* spell, the water weirds reform in two rounds.

The mummified corpse is that of Calistus, a lesser mud sorcerer devoted to Tzolo. If the pristine linens are unwrapped, several items are revealed. Two platinum coins cover Calistus' eyes, and a scepter of ivory and fine silver filigree, topped by a 5,000-gp diamond, rests in the crook of his right arm. This scepter functions as a *rod of terror* (21 charges). Its command word is "hillal." A *girdle of masculinity/femininity* is wrapped about the mud

sorcerer's waist, and he holds a 500-gp blue spinel in his teeth.

The corpse is apparently that of a human female (Calistus was changed by the girdle just prior to his death). The body lies on a metal tube sealed with *explosive runes*. The scroll within bears a false clue written in Taalese:

> Portal in this watery depth,
> Leads to secret treasures kept.
> Tzolo's rest is thus disturbed,
> Thou wilt find her quite perturbed.

The end of another pool (B) passes through the wall to the east. The water here is only 4′ deep and passes under a low archway, 1′ above the water. This watery tunnel flows 30′ to emerge in another chamber (area 26). The water weirds cannot reach anyone beyond the archway.

Water weirds (4): INT very; AL CE; AC 4; MV 12; HD 3+3; hp 25; THAC0 15; #AT 0; Dmg nil; SA drowning; SD half or no damage from magical fire, edged weapons do only 1 hp damage; SZ L; ML 13; XP 650 each if destroyed, not disrupted; MC2.

26. Watery Burial Crypt. This chamber is made of the same dark green marble as area 25. The ceiling is 30′ above. Four black pillars each bear one of the four mud sorcerer symbols, etched into the surfaces facing the waterway that enters the chamber from area 25B. The rear 20′ × 30′ section of this chamber is domed and only 22′ high. A 10′ × 10′ pool (A) lies beneath the dome, and a dark iron door is set in the center of the eastern wall.

A: This pool is 12′ deep and the water is crystal clear. Tiles of azurite (200 in all, 10-gp value each) surround the pool and may be pried out with daggers. Beneath the surface of the water, a form wrapped in white linen can be seen, though it is distorted by the constant undulation of the water's surface. The corpse is that of Fzalle, chief of Tzolo's elite bodyguard.

Touching the water with any object releases the corpse's spirit in the form of a ghost, which attacks immediately. Even if the ghost is successfully turned (treat as a lich), it can only be forced to hover at the domed ceiling (so long as the turning is maintained). If the body below is touched, the turning is broken and the ghost may attack, though it can be turned again.

The body found beneath the wrapping is that of a heavily muscled human male. Fzalle fell into disfavor just prior to the tomb's completion and was knifed in the back by his successor, Yartes, whose corpse is found at area 32. Two ornate silver daggers (worth 120 gp each) are crossed on his chest, and a gem is clutched tightly in each fist (a 500-gp black pearl in the right, a 1,000-gp sapphire in the left).

Tightly sealed ivory scroll tubes are concealed at the backs of the corpse's ankles. One tube contains two scrolls (one with *protection from earth elementals*, the other bearing *gust of wind* and *disintegrate*). The second tube contains three scrolls. One is *cursed* (the reader is *polymorphed* into a butterfly and reduced to an intelligence of 3). Another contains a *protection from water elementals* spell, and the third is inscribed with *project image* and *Tenser's transformation*. A wooden *bowl of watery death* is comically wrapped in coarse papyrus and sits on the corpse's head like a hat.

The great iron portal to the east has indecipherable glyphs etched upon its surface and a lock at its center. Attempting to pick the lock without first detecting and disarming a trap results in 1-10 hp cold damage to all those standing in the 10′-square section before the portal (no saving throw).

The 10′-square chamber (B) beyond the door is identical to areas 16-17, except that the sign opposite the door is the first mud sorcerer symbol. Any PC touching this symbol is instantly *teleported* to area 18, 10′ above the central pool, to quickly plummet into the murky water below.

Fzalle, ghost: INT high; AL LE; AC 0 (8); MV 9; HD 10; hp 72; THAC0 11; #AT 1; Dmg age 10-40 years; SA *magic jar,* fear, aging touch; SD special; MR special; SZ M; ML 20; XP 8,000; MC1.

27. Great Mausoleum. Everyone who enters this huge chamber of white stone is greeted by a gruesome, unsettling sight. The ceiling is 40′ above, and every 10′-square section of the walls holds at its center a burial niche 7′ long, 2′ high and 3′ deep. There are four tiers of such niches, 128 total. Iron rungs are affixed to the walls between the niches, each of which is occupied by a corpse clad in moldering rags.

These people were once servants of Tzolo: scribes, laborers, alchemists, stone carvers, architects, priestlings, bodyguards, minor magicians, and so on. Examining a corpse will reveal a long-dead, brittle-boned human or demihuman, though telltale signs of foul play (garrote marks around the throat, an entry wound from a stiletto in the back, lips discolored by a poisoned liquid, etc.) may be found on many of the bodies. Their once-colorful garments are now rotting and worthless. Many wear strange pieces of bronze jewelry green with age. Some clasp books to their breasts (the books crumble to dust when touched) or clutch at chipped and nicked bronze swords. Some possess spheres of colored glass, fragile wooden staves, or ancient metal rods marked with disturbing glyphs.

After the PCs search through this chamber for five rounds, a complex programmed illusion is set into motion. While searching through the belongings of a corpse, the PCs hear a rustling behind them, but when they turn they see nothing. This recurs several times. Three rounds later, the first of the corpses actually appears to stir. Soon, most of the grisly occupants of the niches appear to rise and make their way to the iron rung ladders, descend-

ing to the floor.

Attempts to turn these advancing undead appear to be ineffective, and thosePCs voicing disbelief make their rolls at −2 due to the vividness of this overwhelming illusion. (Persons successfully disbelieving can voice this information to comrades and negate their −2 penalty.) Those turning to face the creatures find that their weapons simply pass through the corpses, and magical attacks are similarly ineffective.

Wise PCs who confront the illusory undead in this way may suspect trickery. Give them a +1 bonus to disbelief rolls if they voice skepticism. Those watching their comrades facing the horrid onslaught witness them being quickly overcome and torn limb from limb. If the PCs flee the chamber, the undead army appears to follow as far as the last pillar in the wide hall exiting to the east.

If the PCs return to the mausoleum, the chamber will be as they originally found it, and five rounds later the entire illusion will begin again.

The secret door to the south of the entryway is actually the rear wall of the niche on the third tier. The door is only 1" thick and hinged on the top, so that it can easily be pushed open to reveal area 28 (from a height of 30'). This false panel is not apparent from the ground; only by pushing will its true nature be revealed.

28. Pool and Golem Plots. The vaulted ceiling in this chamber peaks at its center 35' above. The secret door on the west wall is 30' above the floor. The pool here is 7' deep, and the water is crystal clear. Three plots are composed of earth with a much higher clay content than any plots previously encountered, though this will be noted only by close examination. A silver ladle, which radiates a faint dweomer, sits at the bottom of the pool in its southeast corner. If the ladle is retrieved, an inscription in Taalese can be read on the bottom of its cup:

Iron portal locked up tight,
Pound and pull with all your might.
Precious metal waters clay,
Earthen being makes the way.

This clue hints at the method by which the party may proceed to the south. The door on the south wall is made of a dark brown iron and has no lock. Leering, inhuman faces have been etched into its dark surface. Those attempting to pull it open via the metal handle will meet with failure. It cannot be opened or circumvented by any means except those described below.

If a ladle of water from the pool is poured on a dirt-clay plot, nothing occurs for three full rounds. At the end of this time, a clay golem begins to wrestle its way up from the plot, completely freeing itself in two more rounds (during this time, the golem is open to all attacks but sustains only 50% of the damage inflicted).

The golem in the western-most plot is fashioned to appear as a heavily muscled human with the head of a camel, the center plot golem appears as an emaciated human with the head of a fanged pig, and the eastern-most plot holds a golem that appears as an incredibly obese human with the head of a hippopotamus. The camel- and pig-headed golems attack as soon as they are free. The hippo-headed golem does not attack; it lumbers to the iron portal and opens the door with a mighty grunt. This golem will serve the party until the secret door at area 29 is opened; then it slumps to the ground, quickly becoming a shapeless pile of watery clay.

The DM should not tell the PCs that these creatures are clay golems. Let them come to this conclusion (or another) on their own.

Clay golems (3): INT non; AL N; AC 7; MV 7; HD 11; hp 50; THAC0 9; #AT 1; Dmg 3-30; SA can *haste* self for three rounds, once/day; SD struck only by blunt magical weapons; MR special; SZ L; ML 20; XP 8,000 each; MC1 (Golem, lesser).

29. Secret Door. This hall is made of mortared stone blocks, 2' square. One block at the center of the wall has a hole in it 2" in diameter. The interior of the whole is painted red and bears threads for a large screw. If the **red tusk** from the colossus at area 30D is screwed into this hole, an individual with a strength of 17 or greater will be able to pull the block out, revealing the corridor beyond. The length of the red tusk provides a grip for only one individual, and no other means will prove effective in opening this portal.

30. Chamber of the Colossus. The pillars (A) running down the center of the hall approaching this great chamber are made of a clay-red marble. Etched into the south face of each pillar is a word (in Common, south to north): "TZOLO," "SHALL," "VANQUISH," "HER," "FOES."

The chamber beyond is a stunning place. The ceiling is vaulted and peaks 45' above at the center. The ceiling is painted to depict animal-headed humans with ornate blades, locked together in bloody duels. Turquoise and ebony tiles frame the long pool (B), which is 15' deep. The water is crystal clear, and the tiles cannot be pried out. In contrast to the white floor of the pool, red tiles spell out in Common, "Tzolo shall vanquish her foes."

Eight red marble statues of tiger-headed humans, naked to the waist and brandishing elaborate polearms, stand guard vigilantly in the chamber. The head of one of these statues (C) screws off clockwise. Within this hollow orb are three scrolls, the first with *augury* (×2) and *purify water*, the second with *strength*, and the third inscribed in Taalese:

Ivory blade, a crimson sword,
Leads thee to the hidden hoard.

This is a clue to the red tusk (an elephant tusk is made of ivory) found on the colossus (D) and its use at the secret door in area 29.

The massive statue (D) in the chamber's northern alcove is the room's dominant feature. It depicts a kneeling elephant-headed human sitting back on its haunches with arms outstretched, palms open in welcome. The statue is 40' tall from its base to the top of its head. It is naked to the waist, revealing a heavily muscled gray chest. Baggy yellow pantaloons cover its legs and torso, and sandals gird its feet. Its huge trunk rears back against its forehead. A 5,000-gp ruby is set in the forehead just above the rearing trunk, and its eyes are huge black opals (worth 1,000 gp each). Two great stone tusks, one painted red, the other green, jut out of the statue's fanged maw. Its fangs (36 in number) are blue smoky quartz stones (50 gp each).

All of these gemstones can be pried out with daggers and both of the tusks can be unscrewed in a clockwise direction. When the green tusk is unscrewed, a green gas smelling of rotting fish is released, equivalent to a *cloudkill* spell (20th-level caster). Nothing untoward occurs if the **red tusk** is unscrewed. It is a key to the secret door found at area 29.

The PCs can easily walk up to the colossus's waist on the thing's gently

angled legs (climbing up from the knee to the torso). A thief could scale the statue beyond the stomach area, climbing up the chest to the head and shoulders (+20% bonus to climbing roll due to the many foot-and handholds found on the beast).

A PC could make his way to one of the colossus's open palms (which are 23' above the ground) by climbing to the thing's shoulders and walking along its outstretched arms, or climbing a rope looped around one of the fingers. However, as soon as a palm is reached, the PC must make a save vs. spells at −2 or be affected by the equivalent of a *Bigby's crushing hand* spell (20th-level caster).

Below the colossus's navel, five ivory tiles (which cannot be pried out) are painted in red with the letters H T F V S. If depressed in this order: **T**zolo, **S**hall, **V**anquish, **H**er, **F**oes, a secret door in the statue's stomach opens inward, revealing a corridor leading to area 31.

31. Tzila's Chamber. Lining the walls of this burial chamber are green basalt statues of fly-headed humans, naked except for white linen loincloths tied around their waists. There are 19 statues in all, and each brandishes a scimitar of red clay (these weapons can be removed from a statue's grasp but shatter if used in actual combat).

These figures radiate a faint dweomer, and if the head or loincloth of a statue is touched, the defiler bears a curse for a full year unless a save vs. death magic is made at −1. Each time the victim engages in the primary activity of his class (fighting, spell-casting, thieving, etc.), a cacophony of buzzing insects fills his head, resulting in a performance penalty (an additional 10% chance of spell failure, −10% to thieving ability, −1 to hit and damage in attacks). Multiclassed individuals suffer such penalties for each of their classes. A *remove curse* and a *bless* spell are required to negate these effects.

The red marble sarcophagus at the center of the chamber is engulfed with exquisite carvings of great serpents, sightless worms, blooming roses, and slimy toads. A large circular seal of red wax, bearing an impression of the fourth mud sorcerer symbol, seals the lid to the sarcophagus at its foot (north end). This wax seal may be easily broken. However, the one doing so must save vs. spells at −2 or be affected by a *fear* spell. The lid is very heavy, and a combined strength of 50 is required to lift it off.

The "corpse" within is clad in flowing red robes. A deep-green silk kerchief inscribed with a *symbol* (pain) covers the face of the coffin's occupant. The imperious face beneath the silk is that of a perfectly preserved beautiful young woman, her raven black hair gathered in a platinum loop (set with a small emerald, 1,000 gp value total). In her right hand she holds a footman's mace made of a gleaming red alloy (described below). A ridged white ivory *ring of spell turning* is on her left index finger. She wears *splint mail +2* beneath the red robes (which act as a *cloak of protection +2*) and clutches a blue metal box to her breast with her left hand (its contents are described below).

She is Tzolo's sister Tzila, held in *temporal stasis*. Totally devoted to her sister, Tzila will be instantly stirred from stasis if the kerchief is removed. If she is attacked prior to awakening, an unseen force deflects the first blow or spell and Tzila awakens instantly. She attacks the party ferociously, shouting all the while (alternately in Common and Taalese): "How dare thou disturb the sleep of the great Tzolo! All shall perish! Prepare to meet thy destruction, fools!" If the battle goes badly for her she attempts to flee, using *invisibility, meld into stone,* or some other means. She will do whatever she can to thwart the party in their quest for her sister.

Beneath Tzila's body is a secret compartment (found on a roll of 1 in 4, 2 in 4 by an elf) that holds a locked iron box (2' × 1' × 1/2'). The box is filled with 125 pebbles that appear to be 100-gp gems (tourmalines, pearls, and aquamarines) and five larger rocks that appear to be 10,000-gp emeralds. Though a *gem of seeing* will reveal this ruse, the true nature of the box's contents will become apparent to all when it is taken 20 miles from the tomb.

Tzila's robes and mace lose their dweomer when she is slain.

Tzila: AL NE; AC −2; MV 12; C9; hp 36; THAC0 16; #AT 1; Dmg by spell or weapon type; S 13, D 18, C 9, I 17, W 18, Ch 17; ML 18; XP 4,000; *splint mail +2, ring of spell turning, mace of hurling +3* (as axe), *robes of protection +2*, blue metal box containing a scroll with the spells *heal* and *conjure earth elemental*, a potion of *invisibility*, a potion of *speed*, a *talisman of ultimate evil* (two charges), and a 500-gp garnet. Spells: *command, cure light wounds* (×2), *light, protection from good* (×2), *charm person or mammal* (×2), *heat metal, hold person* (×2), *know alignment, animate dead, cause disease, meld into stone, prayer, cure serious wounds* (×2), *poison, slay living.*

32. False Crypt. Inscribed above the archway to this chamber is the following, written in several languages (including Taalese and Common):

> Thou hast reached the Inner Sanctum of Tzolo. Tzolo sleeps, waiting for the predestined time of the Jezulein Rebirth. Gloat not, lest thy pride usher in thy Unalterable Doom.

The burial chamber within is well appointed. A large woven rug depicting three great fanged elephant heads (worth 250 gp) lies at the center of the chamber, and the walls are painted with dizzying geometric designs of red, green, and gold. A pair of pure gold candelabra (700 gp each) flank the coffin, each holding a dozen burning vermilion candles (magically lit when the secret door at area 29 was opened) that give off an odd spicy scent. This pleasant odor is a mild sleep agent that fills the room. Everyone who enters here must save vs. poison at +2 or sleep for 11-14 (1d4 + 10) rounds. A save indicates that the individual is immune to the vapors. Only one successful roll is required per person.

The casket sits on a block of reddish marble 4' high. It is made of a finely finished mahogany with handles of the purest silver (100 gp each). Light parquet inlays of walnut on the coffin lid depict the four mud sorcerer symbols as well as geometric designs matching those on the walls.

This lid (hinged on the right) opens easily, revealing the mummified corpse of Yartes, another of Tzolo's bodyguards, covered by a thin shroud of red silk. He wears jewelry made of worked platinum covered with complex geometric etchings and glyphs: wide bracelets on his wrists and ankles (370 gp each); a broad collar about the neck (1,200 gp); three rings bearing the heads of a pig, a camel, and a hippo (375 gp each); a circlet (530 gp); and a perfectly fitting fanged face mask (1,350 gp). He wears a breastplate of hammered platinum, bearing strange etchings and set with six 500-gp peridots (worth 2,200 gp, excluding the value of the gem-

stones). The green robes he wears were once very fine but are now largely rotted away, revealing soiled linen strips beneath. His hair is a great gray mane, spilling luxuriantly about the coffin.

The casket rests on its marble base and can be moved by four persons, using the handles. On the base beneath the casket, the PCs can find a keyhole and the outline of a compartment door (it is false). If the simple lock is successfully picked (+25% to the thief's skill), a mechanism is triggered that causes the block to slowly sink into the ground until it is flush with the floor (this takes two rounds). After another round, a black iron portcullis drops to block the archway and cannot be moved or damaged in any way. On the fourth round, the south wall begins to move northward at a rate of 10' per round.

Though quite similar to the encounter at area 19, this situation is very real. After the wall has advanced 20', the marble block sinks another 1', allowing room for as many as two man-sized persons to lie flat and avoid destruction (or so it seems). This is actually a test of party loyalty and cohesiveness, for when the weight of two individuals is placed here, the block drops out into a pit, 10' square and 40' deep (4d6 hp damage).

The real way out is through a secret door in the approaching wall, which is detectable on a 1-in-8 chance (2-in-8 for an elf). If this door is discovered and opened, the wall stops its advance 5' from the north end of the chamber. Otherwise, all those in the chamber will be crushed to death unless someone employs a *cube of force* or some other sorcerous method. A weapon made of metal or an iron rod propped between the two walls will delay the southern wall's advance for two rounds. With a shuddering metallic groan, the item then bends and the wall continues its approach.

The secret door can be found only on a roll of 1 on 1d12 before the wall begins to move north.

33. Pit. The lid to this pit cannot be detected by any normal means of probing. It is triggered on a roll of 1 on 1d4 (roll for each individual). The lid is hinged on the north side and quickly snaps back into place after it is activated.

The pit below appears to be 20' deep, but an illusory floor hides another 10' drop for a total of 3d6 hp damage. A *silence* spell covers the area beneath the illusory floor. If those above manage to reopen the pit, they see only a bare floor below.

34. Vault of the *Uzrivoy*. This complicated chamber opens with a general description followed by four separate sections describing the Ship, the Stone Face, the Secret Door, and the area Beneath the Platform.

The archway leading into this chamber is inscribed with the following in Taalese:

> The reverent should tread with care.
> The irreverent shall die.

Over the final word of this message is a *symbol* (death).

The great chamber within is 70' × 60', and the domed ceiling is 36' above, shining with a rainbow of colors like the inside of a pearly shell. A large pool, 50' × 40' and 25' deep, dominates the room. A stone platform (40' × 20', resting on eight submerged stone columns) supports the bulk of a mastless wooden ship, 36' long and 12' wide.

This sorcerous craft, the *Uzrivoy*, is a *ship of earth and sea* (or mudship), a gift given to Tzolo by powerful elemental beings (see the sidebar for details on the properties of this ship and its original owners). A *glyph of warding* covers the entire platform (20d4 hp electrical damage; see "Death from Massive Damage," *DMG* page 75). A pair of fanged elephant heads, 10' above the floor on the west wall, spray water from their curled trunks into the pool. Their eyes are 500-gp violet garnets, which can be pried out with daggers. They flank yet another stone face, 6' in diameter, which sits somewhat lower on the wall.

The Ship: Made of a fine reddish wood of unnatural strength, the hull of this craft is supported by eight oak beams angled up from the platform, where they are anchored in iron sleeves sunk into the stone. The deck is 12' above and holds a small cabin to the east, a covered stairway to the west, and a great wheel between these two structures. The wheel is inlaid with ivory and carved with hundreds of tiny letters in a freakish alien script. The stairs are closed off by a locked door; they lead to the hold below. The door to the cabin is also locked. If this lock is successfully opened, weird scintillating colors erupt from the metal handle, acting as an especially powerful *hypnotic pattern* that remains for 20 rounds (affects 48 hit dice/levels, save at −1).

Ship of Earth and Sea (Mudship)

Created by powerful and possessive elemental beings of Earth and Water, only seven of these sorcerous crafts are known to exist. They bear the names *Ungulisar, Ontonkolos, Faronos, Miktyr, Tarjana, Iquonabus,* and *Uzrivoy.*

The *Uzrivoy* is the mudship found in this module, created by archo-elementals Uzrith of Earth and Alyolvoy of Water. To pilot the craft, an individual must wear the ***talisman of the Uzrivoy*** found at area 19 and stand at the central wheel. This confers upon the individual knowledge of the ship's powers and limitations as well as the ability to command it.

The *Uzrivoy*, like other mudships, can sail upon both land and sea, as well as underwater. The pilot of the craft is empowered to breath water, but all others aboard must stay in the decktop cabin or the hold below unless they can breath water by some other means. The mudship is unaffected by weather conditions, is always 100% seaworthy, and saves vs. all attacks as an artifact. Its speeds are as follows:

—On water: 7/hour (14/hour emergency speed)

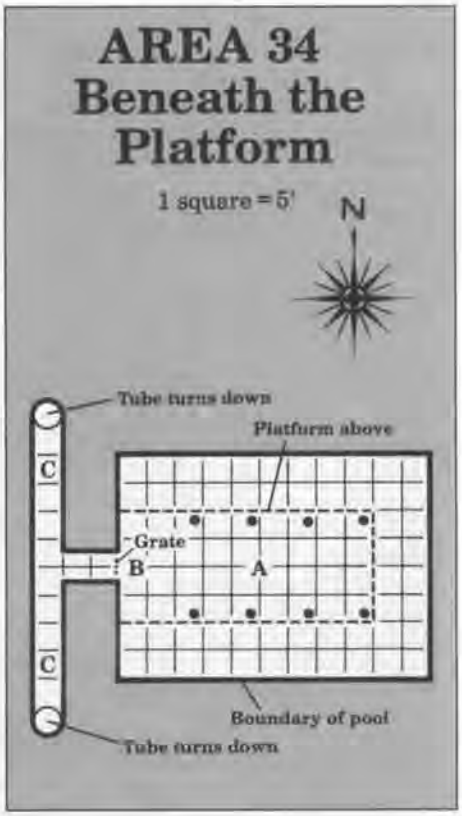
—On land: 4/hour (6/hour emergency speed)

—Underwater: 5/hour (7/hour emergency speed)

Consult the *DMG*, pages 126-127, for more information on the functioning of normal sea-going ships.

When the mudship is sailing on land, the ground appears to part at the ship's prow as does water. After the ship has passed, the earth appears undisturbed. A mudship must sail around obstacles (such as buildings) or land with inclines or declines greater than 45°, though it can pass through as much as 500 yards of solid earth and stone (including manmade structures) once per week. After utilizing this ability, the craft must remain inactive for a full hour. The party may use this power to take the *Uzrivoy* out of the tomb, sailing right through the ground.

Uzrith and Alyolvoy are possessive, evil beings. When they discover that the craft they gave to Tzolo has been stolen by other mortals, they are likely to react swiftly and terribly. The *Uzrivoy* may not remain in the party's possession for long.



The area inside the cabin is an extradimensional space, 20' × 30', that holds a great oak table surrounded by a dozen chairs. Cabinets line the walls, but the room is otherwise empty. The hold of the ship, reached by the narrow staircase, is also an extradimensional space, 60' long and 25' wide. At its center is a wooden sarcophagus protected by a *wyvern watch* spell. The words "TZOLO SLEEPS" (in Taalese) are painted on the coffin lid.

The sarcophagus is easily pried open and contains the remains of Majalor, another of Tzolo's elite bodyguards. He has been rewarded by his master with a special undead status and will attack as soon as the lid is removed. Majalor is dressed in a marvelously preserved robe embroidered with flowers, snakes, and small gemstones (worth 1,100 gp intact; the three dozen gems are worth 720 gp total if torn off). He wears a gold circlet set with two aquamarine stones (825 gp each) and a *ring of spell storing* (contains *enervation, invisible stalker, power word stun,* and *globe of invulnerability*) under a black glove on his left hand. He cannot be turned and is immune to cold, *charm, hold, fear* and *sleep* spells.

Majalor attacks with two raking claws and his hair, which fills the coffin like that of the corpses found at areas 19 and 32, though it is carefully braided into six long locks. The hair animates like snaky appendages. Only one braid may strike at a time, strangling for 1-4 hp damage. After the first successful hit with a braid, all future damage from this lock is automatic. A victim held by a braid can only struggle to free himself, and there is a 10% cumulative chance per round that he will be rendered unconscious by this throttling. To sever an attacking braid (treat as AC 6), the PCs must inflict 4 hp damage from an edged weapon.

Majalor: INT high; AL NE; AC 0; MV 12; HD 9; hp 50; THAC0 11; #AT 3; Dmg 1d6 + 1/1d6 + 1/1d4 (claw/claw/braid, each attack can be on a separate individual); SA strangling, spells; SD immune to mind-influencing spells, regenerates 2 hp per round; MR 10%; SZ M; ML 20; XP 7,000; new undead.

A false bottom in the coffin hides two sacks (one with 764 gp, the other with 412 pp); a wooden case containing carved jade tiles (an ancient game set, 900 gp value); *gauntlets of fumbling;* and three mundane weapons (stiletto, hand axe, and garrote). The hold also contains barrels and boxes of perfectly preserved provisions for a long journey.

Stone Face: This stone visage has an evil, fanged grin on its face (hence the reference to "the ship that is smiled upon" in the clue from area 9). The face has tightly gritted teeth; wild, unkempt hair; huge ears; an arrogant, jutting chin; and squinting eyes from which pour a steady river of tears. These tears, which smell strongly of roses, are actually a virulent contact poison (save at −3 or die). They flow down the face and wall and through an iron grate on the floor. A small metal wheel hidden in the right ear will stop the flow of poison if it is turned 360° to the right, but a 360° turn to the left will spray the poison on all in a 10' radius. Inspection of the chin area is safe after the flow is turned off and the poison wiped away with a cloth. The chin hides a secret compartment (found on a 1-in-4 chance, 2-in-4 by an elf). Folded up in the compartment is a scroll with a clue written in Taalese:

> Four fair stones that bear four signs,
> Keys to She whose tongue maligns
> Those who dare disturb Her sleep.
> Grief and woe is what they'll reap.
> Turn back now, thy soul to save,
> Or seek Her tomb, and find thy grave.

This is a reference to the secret door and the inscribed stones from area 7, along with a warning.

Secret Door: Examination of this wall at eye level (about 5 1/2' high) reveals four slight oval depressions lightly etched in green with the four mud sorcerer symbols. The semiprecious **inscribed stones** found in the priests' sarcophagi at area 7 fit perfectly into these depressions. If the correct symbols are matched (numbers one through four, left to right), the stones actually stick in place. A dagger will be required to remove these stones after they are so affixed.

The secret door will not begin to open for a full turn after the stones have been attached. When it does, the sound of stone grinding against stone echoes throughout the chamber. In four rounds, this 10' section of wall has sunk into the ground, flush with the floor. The four inscribed stones are crushed to powder in the process.

Beneath the Platform (see the diagrams above and on the previous page): This stone platform is 5' thick, 20' wide and extends 40' out over the water. Eight stone columns bear its weight and that of the mudship above. A stone sarcophagus (A) lies beneath the platform, though the PCs will have to enter the water to see it. This sarcophagus is actually a part of the floor and cannot be moved. The lid is sealed with wax and bears an inscription in Taalese:

> Death waits beneath this lid.
> Watery doom in here is hid.

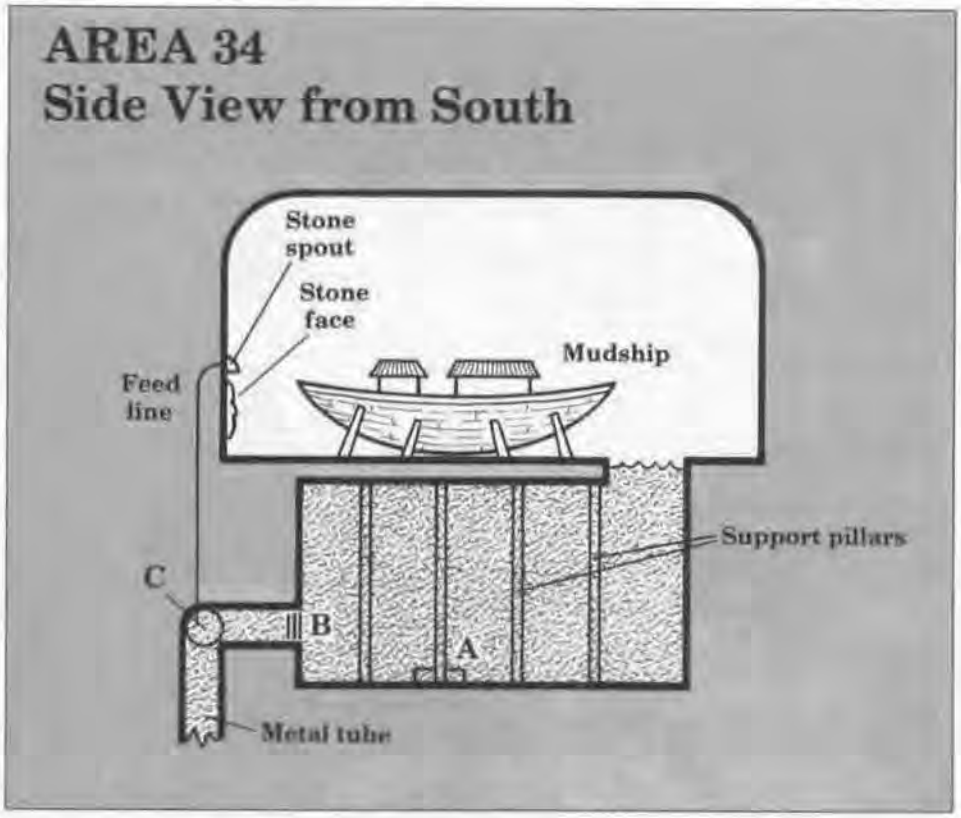
The wax must be removed and a combined strength of 32 utilized to lift the lid. The coffin appears totally empty, but the space is filled with a colorless, tasteless poison that blends quickly with the surrounding water (the area beneath the platform is contaminated in two rounds, the entire pool in four). To avoid death, PCs must save vs. poison at +1 every round they occupy a contaminated area of the pool. The poison is diluted and harmless after two turns.

A secret compartment can be found on the floor of the sarcophagus on a roll of 1 on 1d4. It contains two tightly sealed porcelain vials (*oil of disenchantment* and a potion of *sweet water*); a *gem of insight;* a jade and ivory ring (420 gp value); and a solid platinum statuette of

a fanged elephant bearing an ivory palanquin on its back. The palanquin has a little latched door and contains 20 especially fine turquoise stones (20 gp value each). The elephant's eyes are tiny chrysoberyls, and the statuette's value (excluding the turquoises) is 1,975 gp. This **elephant statuette** is a key to Tzolo's true hiding place and on its belly are these words (in Taalese):

Walk beneath dead Jaiku's face
This beast reveals the hidden place.

At the center of the west wall, 5' above the floor, a convex black iron grate (B), 3' in diameter, is affixed to the wall by eight great slotted bolts. A PC with a minimum strength of 16 can use a dagger or the like to unscrew the bolts, though there is a 20% chance per bolt that the weapon will snap. Beyond is a T-shaped tunnel, 4' in diameter and made of metal. Hollow poles penetrate the ceiling of this tunnel at C. These are the feed lines for the spraying elephant heads above. The northern tube dips down at a steep angle after 30' and draws water from an underground river (which runs north to south) 200 yards below via a special enchantment. The southern tube takes a sharp turn downward after 30' and empties water into this same river.



35. True Burial Chamber of Tzolo. This is another complicated chamber. The general description is followed by five sections that describe the braziers, the urns, the banner, the sarcophagus, Tzolo's niche, and the door. The DM should read this section very carefully, as it is the most complex of the entire module.

When the PCs open the secret door in area 34, read or paraphrase the following to the players:

> As the thick stone wall shudders slowly into the earth, little dust devils float out of the vault, dancing about your ankles. The chamber revealed beyond is 20' square; its painted walls depict a grisly scene. Dozens of animal-headed humans and demihumans struggle to break free of strangling vines as sharp thorns tear hungrily at their flesh. Above this disturbing vision (near the ceiling) hangs a faded red banner of silk, 6" wide, embroidered over and over with those four accursed symbols. From this vantage, it is unclear how the banner is affixed to the walls.
>
> The floor is made of red, green, and gold ceramic tiles. A large, deep-green tapestry (16' square) is suspended from the center of the ceiling 15' above. It seems to shimmer like a dragonfly's wings. Four brass bowls filled with bluish coals hang 4½' off the floor by delicate chains attached to the ceiling at the corners of the vault. A dozen stoppered clay urns line the north and south walls, and opposite this western opening is a great black iron portal. Occupying the center of the chamber is a large white marble sarcophagus, 7' long, 3' wide, 4' high, expertly carved and crafted.

Moments after the sinking door finishes its descent with a loud slam, a guttural whisper issues forth from the chamber (via an *audible glamer* spell). Read the following to the players:

> "Grave robbers! Defilers! Thou hast violated my tomb! I, the indomitable Tzolo, will have my revenge! Thou shalt all perish!" Immediately, a high pitched buzzing issues from within the vault, and suddenly, the green tapestry hanging from the ceiling tears, unravels, begins to transform into a grotesque, buzzing cloud!

The tapestry is transforming into an enormous swarm of insects (treat as an *insect plague*, 15th-level caster, centered on the opening of the vault, filling all of chambers 34 and 35; the transformation requires two full rounds). The party must deal with this swarming mass or wait outside the area of effect for the next 30 rounds before proceeding.

Just beyond the threshold of the crypt, a few dozen *invisible* poisoned caltrops are scattered on the floor. Each person crossing this threshold will step on 0-3 caltrops (roll 1d4, 4 = 0). For each caltrop tread upon, the PC must make a saving throw vs. poison. The poison acts on the brain's speech center; those failing their saves will be unable to speak for 9-14 (1d6 + 8) turns, with dire effect on spell-casting and communicating with peers. Each caltrop also causes 1 hp damage. Those wearing iron-soled footwear are unharmed.

Braziers: The bluish coals in these bra-

ziers will drive the swarming insects out of the vault as long as they burn (eight turns). The party has two rounds to light these bowls before the tapestry has completely transformed and attacks.

Urns: There are 12 clay urns here (six on the north wall, six on the south). Each urn is 3' tall and 10" in diameter. Rubber stoppers sealed with tar crown the urns, and the likeness of an animal-headed human adorns each. The animal totem and contents of each urn are described below.

North wall (left to right):

—Bear: 500 pp

—Tiger: 50 10-gp tiger-eye agates

—Snake: releases a gas cloud, 10' radius, save vs. poison or lose 1-6 points of strength for 2d4 turns

—Mole: 1,000 cp

—Toad: three potions of *extra-healing* in sealed metallic vials

—Camel: 1,000 sp

South wall (left to right):

—Donkey: 1,000 lead pieces with a *fool's gold* spell cast on them

—Dog: 40 pieces of cut glass, appearing to be base 100-gp gems

—Cat: 50 10-gp eye agates

—Raven: A great, ghostly raven's head emerges when the stopper is removed and attacks the opener with a THAC0 of 13. A successful hit indicates the victim's head has been severed. The raven vanishes after one strike, successful or not.

—Horse: a potion of *speed* in a stoppered porcelain vial

—Goat: a scroll with *crystalbrittle* and *monster summoning IV* spells.

The urns may be cracked open with a good hit from a blunt weapon, but this method will destroy the contents of the toad-, dog- and horse-headed urns. It will also negate the trap on the raven-headed urn.

Banner: This long banner of red silk with white mud sorcerer symbols sewn along its length is affixed to the walls with a sticky adhesive. It is 14' off of the floor and can be easily removed by anyone who can reach it. However, as soon as even a thread of the banner touches the ground, it is instantly transformed into a deadly amphisbaena snake of great size. The beast remains the color of the banner and bears the mud sorcerer symbols along its scaly length. It attacks immediately, and when destroyed is transformed back into the banner, now tattered and torn.

Amphisbaena snake: INT animal; AL N; AC 3; MV 12; HD 9; hp 48; THAC0 11; #AT 2; Dmg 1-4/1-4; SA attacks with both heads, poison; SD immune to cold-based attacks; SZ L; ML 12; XP 2,000; MM1/88.

Sarcophagus: This sarcophagus is made of the purest white marble, its sides carved to depict intertwining snakes and thorny roses. The lid has a bas relief carving of an elephant-headed human wearing an exquisite splint mail breastplate, its arms crossed over its chest. In one hand it holds a smooth oval stone, carved with the first mud sorcerer symbol. A sheathed bastard sword is at its side. The head protrudes from the lid more than the rest of its form, the curling trunk, sharp tusks, fanged maw, and evil, cunning eyes all carved in great detail. The entire coffin radiates a strong magic, though this actually comes from the elephantine form itself. If the sarcophagus is touched in any way, the thing's sorcerous power is activated.

First, all persons standing near the sarcophagus are thrown back by some unseen power, and a *wall of force* (20th-level caster) covers all approaches to the coffin. Suddenly, the elephant-headed form begins to change so that it takes on a more fleshy, grayish hue. Within a round, the thing struggles free of the stone, sits up, and stands firmly on the coffin lid, sword drawn, facing the party. As long as the party does not remove the *wall of force* (with a *disintegrate* spell, a *rod of cancellation*, or a *sphere of annihilation*), the thing will not attack, nor will it communicate in any way with the party beyond its evil, hate-filled glare. As soon as the wall is removed, however, Tzolo's guardian attacks ferociously, pursuing the PCs wherever they may flee until all are dead.

The smooth **oval stone** possessed by the guardian is the key to leaving the tomb. Any PC holding the oval stone will be aware of this power and where it must be employed. If held up to the large symbol on the north wall in area 17, all within the room will be *teleported* back to area 16. The oval stone will also lower the granite block at area 1.

If the PCs are successful in slaying the guardian, they may proceed with the sarcophagus. The lid is sealed with mortar, which must be chiseled out before the top can be lifted off (with a combined strength of 35). Three fine silk shrouds of red, green, and gold (25 gp value each) cover this male corpse. It is wrapped in white linen strips and

wears much in the way of jewelry: a silver circlet inset with a dozen ebony tiles (550 gp value), two silver bracelets designed to appear as snakes gripping their own tails (300 gp value each), a thin collar of beaten silver with mud sorcerer symbols etched into its surface (260 gp value), and a silver nose ring set with a tiny ruby (275 gp value). He holds a baton of deep green marble (1' long, 2" in diameter) in his right hand (the name "Jaiku" is carved into it) and a 500-gp black pearl is clenched in the left (hidden by the linen wrapping). The circlet, nose ring and baton all radiate magic (*Nystul's magic aura*). The face, also hidden by the wrapping, is serene yet sinister and well preserved.

However, this corpse is yet another decoy, the remains of another of Tzolo's lieutenants. The real Tzolo lies beneath Jaiku in a hidden compartment. Removing the lieutenant's body reveals a small crystal orb (2" in diameter and radiates magic) located where his head rested. Four oddly shaped indentations resembling round footprints surround the orb. This orb can be easily removed; inscribed in the cavity where it rested is a *symbol* (insanity) and the following clue, written in Taalese:

> Bearing gems upon its back,
> Place the creature in its tracks.
> Trunk and tusk have platinum beast.
> By its walk, She is released.

This clue refers to the **elephant statuette** from beneath the platform in area 34. If the feet of the elephant (turquoises included) are set in the indentations, a 2"-thick stone divider disintegrates, along with the statuette. The true hiding place of Tzolo has finally been discovered.

Tzolo's guardian: INT genius; AL CE; AC −4; MV 15; HD 13; hp 92; THAC0 7; #AT 2; Dmg 2-12/by weapon type (+2/+5 for 18/99 strength); SA special; SD special; MR 50%; SZ M; ML 20; XP 14,000; see sidebar for complete information.

Tzolo's niche: A shimmering orange *prismatic wall* hovers an inch above a figure covered in a shroud of translucent red silk. Beneath the shroud, Tzolo's body is completely wrapped in fine white strips of linen—excluding her head, hands, and feet, which are bare. Her long white hair is braided into five thick locks, and she wears a circlet of platinum set with four amethysts (1,100 gp value total).

Tzolo's arms are crossed over her chest, fists clenched, the backs of them facing upward. She wears an invisible *ring of three wishes* on her left pinky (detectable only if this digit is carefully probed) and clutches two smaller emeralds (1,000 gp each) in this same hand. She wears two platinum rings, each set with a small tourmaline (350 gp each) and holds an ebony and silver wand in her right hand (it is fashioned like a shepherd's crook, 9" long, 500 gp value). She wears a wide platinum choker set with six rectangular topazes about her neck (3,600 gp), platinum ankle bracelets (425 gp each), and platinum earrings (fashioned into the shape of the first mud sorcerer symbol, 150 gp for the pair). Beneath her folded arms (over the linen wrapping) is an exquisite breastplate made of 28 long rectangles of jade strung together with green thread on a platinum sternum (6,800 gp total). Ancient platinum coins (200 gp each to a collector) rest on her eyes.

The corpse lies on another silk shroud, this one midnight blue in color. Beneath the shroud is a bed of platinum ingots (24 in all, worth 600 gp each). Removing these ingots reveals a 2'-square compartment whose door is locked. If the door is opened before the trap can be disarmed, a *death fog* is released and fills the entire vault for 24 rounds. The compartment is 2' deep and holds:

—A *wand of earth and stone* (21 charges, command word "doulis")

—A *book of infinite spells*

—A *frost brand* (bastard sword)

—A 3/4"-square cube of platinum with *Nystul's magic aura* cast on it (this may be mistaken for a *cube of force*)

—Two *ioun stones* (deep red sphere and pale lavender ellipsoid)

—An ivory scroll tube (worth 125 gp) containing a scroll of *stone tell, animate rock,* and *spike stones;* a scroll of *transmute dust to water, stone to flesh,* and *part water;* and two maps (requiring a *read magic* spell to decipher) to the tombs of rival mud sorcerers Iyayo and Nagjyat. The tube is capped and closed with a burgundy wax seal that is *fire trapped* (1d4+20 hp damage)

—Two 1,000-gp fire opals, a 1,000-gp black opal, a 5,000-gp jacinth, a 5,000-gp ruby, seven 100-gp pink corals, two 500-gp deep blue spinels, and two 500-gp peridots.

There are also two ancient tomes here, written in Taalese. One is entitled *Kaia Jezulein Prophaetus Minorum*

Tzolo's Guardian

This powerful, sorcerous, man-sized creature, a gift to Tzolo from evil elemental beings, is a deadly adversary. It wields a *bastard sword* +2 (which turns those it hits to stone on a natural 20) and has 18/99 strength (+2 to hit and +5 to damage with the sword). It attacks with the blade (1-8+7 hp damage, including strength and magical bonuses) and a combination bite/tusk strike for 2-12 hp damage. These attacks can be directed at two separate individuals.

The guardian can survive in both earth and water elements. At will, it can cast *detect good, detect invisible, water breathing* (on another), and *dispel magic* (16th level of ability). Three times a day it may cast *fly* (12th level), *passwall* (this spell will function for the guardian in the tomb), *water walk,* and *ice storm.* Once a day it can cast *conjure elemental* (earth or water, 12 HD), *transmute rock to mud, transmute mud to rock, stone shape,* and *stone tell.* The oval stone it possesses allows it to cast a *sink* spell once per week and a *wall of stone* spell twice a day (this same item acts as a key for the party to escape the tomb, though it will not reproduce the aforementioned powers).

The guardian is not affected, either directly or indirectly, by any earth or water, therefore it is unharmed by certain spells (*transmute rock to mud, flesh to stone, earthquake*), cannot be drowned, and cannot be attacked by creatures from the planes of elemental Earth or Water or the para-elemental plane of Ooze. The guardian takes half or no damage from cold, acid, and electricity. If poisoned, it is unaffected and can return the toxin in a spray through its trunk (a cloud of poison 8' in diameter, which dissipates in two rounds). It is immune to all illusions and has 50% magic resistance. A +2 or better weapon is needed to hit the guardian, and it regenerates 3 hp per round. After it is slain, the guardian continues regenerating and will revive when it reaches 50 hp to seek out and destroy the party.

Tzolo's guardian can be permanently slain only if burned by magical fire after it is reduced to 0 hp.

Until it is permanently slain, none of the guardian's possessions can be removed; they seem to be attached to the creature. When it has been permanently slain, the creature and its possessions are turned back into marble. At this point, the oval stone may be taken from it.

(Minor Prophecies of the Jezulein), the other is *Perfectus Fe Syrcae Magica et os Jezulein (Perfect Iron Circle Magic and the Jezulein)*. These two rare codices are worth 3,000 gp each to a sage or scholar and are protected by *explosive runes*.

Though her hair is white, Tzolo's face is that of a youthful, handsome woman. It appears as though she was only recently interred here, as there are no signs of decay.

Perhaps it is the height of irony that Tzolo, despite her careful preparations, lies here stone cold dead. Only another of her mud sorcerers was of sufficient skill to cast the spells necessary to seal her in sorcerous slumber and close her tomb. The colleague she chose was Piyyat, a wily individual who had, over the years of their association, gained Tzolo's confidence.

Despite sacred oaths sworn to the contrary, Piyyat neglected certain essential incantations, so that while Tzolo's body was perfectly preserved, her life force slowly but surely ebbed away. Piyyat, perhaps no more cruel and diabolic than Tzolo, believed that eliminating this rival mud sorcerer would secure his position within the Iron Circle when the Jezulein were released from their necromantic slumbers.

His treachery accomplished, Piyyat crept off to his own labyrinthine crypt deep beneath the earth. Whether he met a similar fate at the hands of some other colleague or lies waiting in his crypt to this day is unknown.

Door: This great black iron portal has no apparent lock or handle, though five huge hinges are attached to the wall on the left-hand side. The entire surface of the door is covered with the complex etchings of various glyphs, though none of them are recognizable save the four mud sorcerer symbols. While this door is closed, contact with it by exposed flesh produces an effect similar to a *chill touch* spell (save at −1, 2d8 hp damage and a two-point strength loss, 23-round duration).

There is a 2′ spherical cavity at the center of the door, 6′ above the ground. The **crystal orb** found in the sarcophagus fits in this cavity. When the orb is placed in the depression, the heavy door slams open with incredible speed, doing 2d10 hp damage to anyone standing before it. A successful dexterity check on 1d20 indicates that the PC was able to leap out of the way in time to avoid being smashed.

36. Decoy Treasure Vault. This chamber is covered by a *vacancy* spell, and all its contents are shrouded under a huge (22′ × 11′) moth-eaten tapestry. Beneath the cloth are numerous vessels and items of interest, but mere baubles in comparison to the wealth found in Tzolo's niche.

There are nine locked iron chests against the east wall, each containing 1,200 cp ensorcelled so as to appear as gold. This effect will be nullified when the coins have been out of the tomb for 24 hours. Two dozen tall clay urns, sealed with cork and tar, occupy the southern area of the vault and contain the dried viscera of those servants buried in the great mausoleum (area 27). Faded geometric designs of blue and green adorn these urns.

Twelve statues of various animal-headed humans made of green basalt are stored in the northern area of the chamber, and all radiate magic. On occasion (a roll of 1 on 1d4, check each round), some of the statues appear to move. This movement is always caught out of the corner of a PC's eye, never directly viewed. The statues are harmless, placed here as an unsettling distraction.

Several other items are scattered about the floor (those with asterisks have *Nystul's magic aura* cast on them): 86 pp; 441 gp; 712 sp; two short swords; four javelins*; two dozen arrows and a leather quiver*; three spears; a long sword with a 100-gp tourmaline in its pommel*; three sticks of lacquered wood (mahogany, oak and ash, with the words "tisha," "magware, and "gont" inscribed on them)*; a *vacuous grimoire;* two hand axes; a battle axe; six polished discs of iron (8″ in diameter)*; a gnarled oak staff*; a birchwood pole (8′ long); and a black marble baton (2″ in diameter, 1′ long *.

At the center of the east wall is a faded square of red, 1′ × 1′. A secret compartment will be found here on a roll of 1 on 1d4. Within are four smaller mud sorcerer texts and a red dial. The books are in Taalese: *Os Contanum il Mishtot (The Diary of Mishtot), Mairu et Phobos et Futurum (Mud and Fear and Future), Kesses Hussorum il Jezule (Faintest Whispers of Jezule),* and *Os Femina il Urta, os Mascu il Aguas (The Daughters of Earth, the Sons of Water)*. Each book is protected by *explosive runes* and worth is worth 1,500 gp to a sage.

If the red dial is turned 360° in either direction, the iron door to the vault slams shut, trapping all inside as the crystal orb is jarred out of its cavity and falls to the ground in area 35. The only thing of note on this side of the door is the third mud sorcerer symbol, etched at the portal's center. Once the door is closed, the only means of escaping is by casting a water-based spell (*part water, lower water, create water, purify water,* etc.) on the iron portal. Otherwise, unless somebody in area 35 is able to return the orb to the cavity, the party is trapped forever.

Concluding the Adventure

Jezulein prophecies actually foretold the cult's destruction, but subtle hints of a glorious rebirth are found in some obscure passages. Tzolo and her cohorts sought to cheat fate. Hidden from their just punishment, many still wait until the time for their return, when they can spread their cruel faith anew. Tzolo laid herself to sleep, dreaming of the day when the descendants of her trusted minions, having kept the macabre Jezulein traditions alive, would liberate her from the cold earth. The malevolent ministrations of Piyyat prevented Tzolo from living to see that day, and for this the party should be most grateful.

The adventurers have many options after recovering from their exploration of the mapped areas of the tomb. They may choose to follow one of the two maps found in Tzolo's niche, or explore the metal tunnels found underneath the stone platform at area 34. Perhaps the underground river leads to submerged crypts or the ruins of some forgotten aquatic civilization.

Another possibility for further adventure exists if the party manages to take the mudship *Uzrivoy* with them. Perhaps the creators of this craft, the mysterious archo-elementals Uzrith and Alyolvoy, will fight over possession of the ship, drawing the party into their fierce rivalry.

However, the most immediate chore for the party will be to journey to a large city where they may find buyers for their sizable treasure cache. When news of the gems and jewelry they possess is spread about the city, dozens of greedy cutthroats and unscrupulous merchants will dream up plots to relieve the PCs of their excess wealth—and perhaps their lives. Ω